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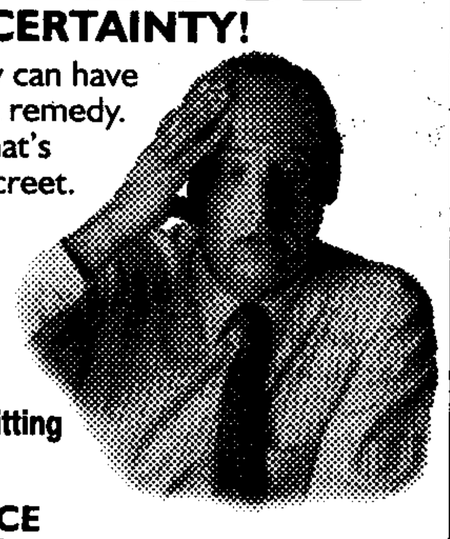

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MR TONY Blair has my fullest support in his determination to rid the market place of tacky Princess Diana memorabilia. It is deplorable that a life lived with exemplary dignity and decorum should be commemorated by items such as ashtrays, t-shirts, mugs, cigarette lighters and commemorative stamps issued by the government. *(Shome mishtake surely? E.S.)*

Equally distasteful is the flood of speculative books and newspaper articles filled with wild conspiracy theories and offensive sexual speculation.

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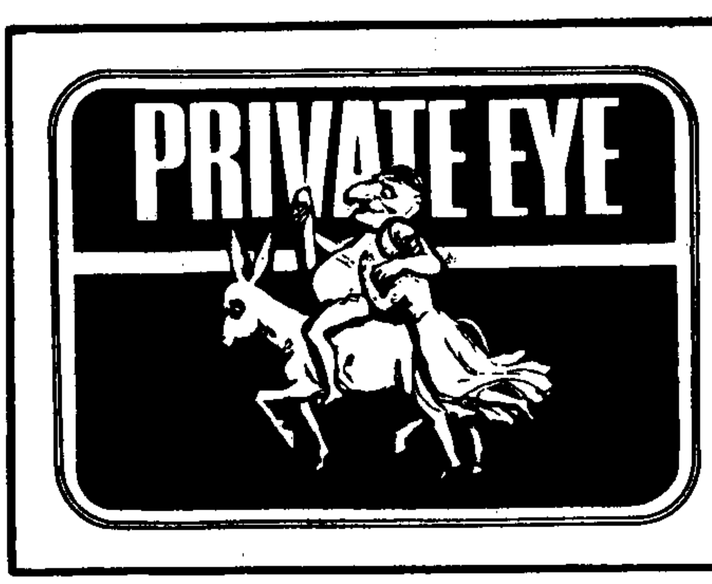

COLOUR SECTION

THE unemployed will be delighted to see some of the *Eye*'s old friends queuing to join "new" Labour's New Deal, part of its welfare to work scheme.

Firms that take on young people who have been out of work for more than six months will receive a £60 weekly subsidy for each new employee, plus £750 towards training. But there is little to stop ruthless firms getting rid of older staff, taking on cheap subsidised labour and then letting them go when handouts stop.

The employees' interests will be safeguarded by handpicked "new" Labour favourites like Graham Hawker, chief executive of privatised Welsh utilities giant Hyder. He chairs the New Deal taskforce in Wales — despite being more used to sending Welsh people from work to welfare. He shed more than 1,000 of the 9,000 workforce when he merged electricity and water supplies. He also opposed the windfall tax on privatised utilities that, initially anyway, is funding the scheme.

Another businessman involved is Reed Executive chairman Alec Reed. He donated £100,000 to Labour in 1996 and Reed Personnel Services, a subsidiary, has been awarded the contract to run a welfare to work pilot scheme in Hackney and the City.

Last year one of Reed's senior managers, Marlene Turner, took Reed's firm to an industrial tribunal. She claimed that when she became pregnant she was subjected to harassment and forced out of her job. The tribunal found that the actions of Alec Reed himself contributed to her victimisation. In court he boasted: "We always fight industrial tribunal cases and we always win." In fact he lost — but he did win the "new" Labour contract.

Among the first companies pledging themselves to welfare to work is good old Stagecoach (*Eyes passim*), the bus company which took over South West trains, sacked 70 drivers and cancelled 200 services creating misery for commuters on its routes.

MI5 has still not done a deal with David Shayler, its former officer who did a bunk and started talking to the newspapers about his secret files.

When he disclosed last summer in the *Mail on Sunday* that there was a file on Peter Mandelson covering Mandy's short and undistinguished career in the Communist party, the government went berserk and slapped a gagging injunction on the *Mail on Sunday*, banning all further Shayler revelations.

Negotiations were opened with Shayler, who had fled abroad. At first MI5 seemed to be willing to deal with him if he agreed to return to Britain and be debriefed. In return he would get a relatively lenient punishment. The deal seemed vague and Shayler, to strengthen his hand, went on talking to journalists. He gave an interview to the BBC's Mark Urban, which greatly worried MI5. It realised that Shayler had access to far more sensitive material than it had previously imagined.

The threat of further disclosures seemed to worry MI5, and its attitude changed from friendly dealing to open hostility. Government writs have started to fly against newspapers or television stations whose journalists have talked to Shayler. Special branch officers seem to be after every recorded word and every note for which Shayler was responsible. The *Guardian* has been ordered by special branch to hand over the full text of a letter from Shayler, most of which it published.

It will be interesting to see if the media defend themselves against these demands for disclosure by invoking the free press provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights. If so, the government will find itself in court arguing against the very provisions it is adopting into British law.

TEN years ago a dispute raged between a National Trust worker hired to do private restoration work and her employer, a wealthy shop owner.

Restoration expert Sheila Pettit alleged that her employer was "desecrating" the former royal house she was working on, and said: "I think he is not mainly concerned any more with the preservation of this microcosm of British royalty, but wishes to use the place merely for publicity."

In return the shop owner accused Sheila Pettit of theft and withdrew advertising from Times Newspapers, where the report first appeared.

The shop owner was of course Mohamed Fayed, and the house was the Duke and Duchess of Windsor's villa in Paris, which is now the subject of the largest ever royal auction. Forty four thousand items will be removed from the house and flogged off in New York, a desecration which has indeed brought the Harrods owner plenty of publicity.

THE Tories' attack on culture secretary Chris Smith for sacking lottery regulator Peter Davis backfired in the Commons thanks to the maverick Alan Clark, former Tory trade minister.

Strangely silent in the exchange was Virginia Bottomley, the former heritage secretary. She adamantly refused to sack Davis when his free flights at the expense of G-Tech, which won a licence to print money from the lottery, were exposed and later denounced by the public accounts committee (PAC). She told the House Davis had done nothing to contravene civil service rules — but he had.

Meanwhile the real mysteries remain: why did the Tory government insist on giving the contract to G-Tech, and on staving off all later criticism of the enormous and easy profits made by all five components of Camelot (*Eyes passim*)? And why are the Tories still so keen to defend G-Tech and its friendly regulator?

FACT: Former Tory sports minister Lord Moynihan is a £60,000-a-year consultant for G-Tech.

ANOTHER FACT: Former Tory social services secretary Lord Moore sits on the G-Tech board.

YET ANOTHER FACT: Racal, one of the Camelot five, gave £75,000 to the Tories in election year.

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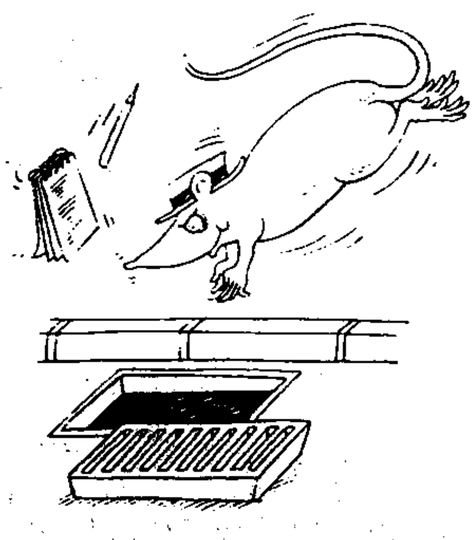

WHY did Piers "Boy" Morgan abandon any last pretence at independent journalism and fill the *Mirror* with pages of *Hello!*-style guff about Mohamed Fayed, all so cringingly obsequious that it might as well have been penned by bouffant lackey Michael Cole himself?

Could this fawning coverage by any chance be related to Fayed's rumoured willingness — first mentioned here last December — to assist the struggling Mirror Group by taking its half-ownership of the *Indie* off its hands?

AN EDITORIAL in the *Mirror* on St Valentine's Day did its best to massacre Rupert Murdoch. Headed "Viper in Labour's Bosom", it poured vitriol on the Digger for repeatedly telling John Major before the election that the *Sun* would back him after all if he came out against Europe and the single currency. It went on to warn Tony Blair that Murdoch is a fickle friend who has not "become a convert to socialism".

Funnily enough Blair knows this already — not least because his own press secretary, Alastair Campbell, is a former Murdoch employee. But is the *Mirror* any less fickle or more socialist? Mirror boss David "Rommel" Montgomery is a right-wing Ulsterman; new editor-in-chief Kelvin MacKenzie is an unreconstructed Thatcherite who ran the "Up Yours Delors" campaign in the *Sun* and is fanatically opposed to the *Mirror*'s traditional pro-Europe line; *Sunday Mirror* editor Brendon "Chucky" Parsons and new *People* editor Neil "Wolfman" Wallis (a longtime Kelvin lickspittle brought in from Wapping) both stand a long way to the right of even Blairite "new" Labour.

All of which might explain why the Mirror Group, whose readers are mainly to the left of Blair, has lost touch so badly with its audience — and why its papers' circulations are heading rapidly down the pan.

THE *Sun* (16 Feb) had a first leader and a big page lead on page 11 denouncing a judge's reported recommendation not to hold a public inquiry into the Hillsborough disaster.

"For the loved ones of the 96 who died," wept the leader, "a second public inquiry would put their minds at rest."

Just a moment. Wasn't it the *Sun* who, on the morning after the disaster, blamed the whole thing on drunks and hooligans from Liverpool? Yes it was.

On the same day, the *Mirror* had a very small last leader and a much smaller page lead on page 15 making the same points.

Just a moment. Wasn't it the *Mirror* that campaigned for years for the Hillsborough families and continuously denounced the *Sun* for underplaying and cheapening the tragedy? Yes it was.

What can explain the apparent reversal of roles?

FACT: The editor of the *Sun* at the time of Hillsborough was Kelvin MacKenzie.

ANOTHER FACT: The man in charge of editorial policy at the *Mirror* now is, er, Kelvin MacKenzie.

AFTER Friday morning conference last week, new *Indie* editor Rosie Boycott asked her colleague David Robson — an old chum — to stay behind for a chat.

"I've appointed a new features editor," she confided.

"Er, but I'm the features editor," Robson pointed out. "So what's my role now?"

"You don't have one. You're sacked."

Never let it be said, however, that Rosie has no heart. "I hope this won't affect our friendship," she added sweetly, as Robson collected his belongings. "You will still talk to me if you see me at parties, won't you?"

MICHAEL "Mad Mike" Pilgrim, newly appointed managing editor of the *Indie*, has found an ingenious way to spy on his hacks.

He has installed something called a "Mac Superserver" on his computer, which allows him to see what they're up to and how long they're taking over it. He can even inspect their private letters, CVs and other detritus stored on their hard disks.

Though Pilgrim had hoped to keep it a secret, he gave the game away last week when challenging a hackette about her work-rate: he told her exactly when she had started writing a particular piece and when she'd finished.

Out of curiosity, an *Indie* hack logged on to Pilgrim's own machine last week and started rummaging through the internet records — only to find that someone using the computer had visited an amazing number of hard-porn sites recently.

Clearly this porn-fiend isn't Pilgrim himself. But who is it?

***SUNDAY MIRROR* editor Brendon "Chucky" Parsons may not know Bosnia from Chechnya (*Eye* 943), but this is par for the course among the second-raters now employed by the Mirror Group — home of David Montgomery's preposterous "Academy of Excellence".**

On 4 February the *Mirror* accompanied an article on the death penalty in America with a "map". It labelled the state of New Mexico as Colorado, Colorado as Utah and Utah as New Mexico. The district of Columbia was on the wrong side of the Potomac, and Indiana was left out altogether — the first time the *Mirror* has ever passed up an opportunity to get the word "Diana" on to a page.

FORMER *Sunday Mirror* supremo Bridget "Death" Rowe is divorcing her husband, sometime Irish showjumper Jim Nolan — and very acrimonious it is too.

If she weren't a party to the action, it would make just the sort of story Bridget used to love in her tabloid heyday. (Arguments over their many houses are particularly notable — a mansion here, a farm there, a villa in the Algarve, a couple of time-shares in Scotland and Kent.)

According to Rowe, the last straw was a holiday in Portugal last August. While playing a round of golf with Mirror Group managing director Charlie "Gorbals" Wilson, Nolan gave a long and "highly critical" account of his marriage — and then "further threatened to sell his version of the marital difficulties to other newspapers". As the boss of the *People* and *Sunday Mirror*, Bridget naturally found such conduct despicable.

Worse was to come. Shortly before flying back to England on 31 August, Bridget was "deeply distressed" to hear of the Princess of Wales's death. Instead of comforting the poor sensitive lass, her hubby spent the flight loudly accusing her of being "one of the tabloid editors with blood on her hands". A reasonable point of view, one might think, especially since Rowe had just blown a six-figure sum on paparazzi shots of Di and Dodi snogging. Other passengers on the plane "began to look at her with obvious hostility and anger". Soon after arriving home she consulted her divorce lawyers.

"THE only people who merit a full-page obit are Mrs Thatcher and the Pope!" Charles Moore, editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, once declared to one of his obituary gofers.

Moore is a recent convert to Catholicism and a longstanding worshipper of Mrs Thatch, so his decree was not perhaps surprising. What was surprising was the *Telegraph*'s excessive eulogising of Moore's recently departed hero, Enoch Powell.

Not only did Lord Snooty eat his words and give Powell a full-page obit, but he cleared acres of space across pages four and five, as well as the first leader, for gushing personal tributes and general hagiography.

Good thing for *Telegraph* readers that the baroness didn't go on the same day.

HACKS at the collapsing *Express* are increasingly convinced their socialist boss Lord Hollick is asset stripping the paper in order to sell it at huge profit to some ego-crazed self-publicist like Mohamed Fayed.

Nothing is repaired any more; the office windows are no longer cleaned; the air conditioning no longer works; more redundancies are expected soon. Senior executives are now either largely indifferent (associate editor Chris Williams) or despairing (executive editor Mark Palmer).

The duplicitous editor Richard "Monk" Addis spends his time, invisible to most journalists, fiddling while the circulation dives towards the fatal one million mark. His only scoop has been to sign cookery writer Delia Smith for £250,000.

While the *Mail on Sunday* sold massively with its laminated Delia recipe cards, she told the *Express* that as boss of Norwich FC she'd rather write about soccer. Addis agreed she could pontificate in the Saturday Sports section — with a recipe on the same page. This has been backed by a massively expensive prime time TV ad campaign. But the result is a flood of furious complaints from disgusted readers. Another brilliant *Express* recipe for disaster!

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Richmond Borough Guardian

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Bristol Evening Post

MURDOCH's minions at Wapping lived up to Fleet Street's finest traditions last month while covering the sad saga of Blake Clay, a Nottingham boy who is allergic to 95 percent of food and lives on a diet of cauliflower and broccoli.

The story, which first broke in the *Nottingham Evening Post*, was picked up by two local agencies, Page One and Raymond's. But when representatives of Page One turned up, the boy was out. Though they were offered the family photo album by the boy's mother, Mrs Clay, they said they'd come back later to take their own pictures.

Then Raymond's press agency arrived and offered to "look after" Mrs Clay in return for exclusive rights. When Page One returned they were told of the Raymond's contract and asked to leave — whereupon the owner of Page One, Doug Marke, allegedly telephoned the mother claiming to be Doug Marke of the *Daily Mail* in London, and demanding that his photographer be allowed in.

Meanwhile, the Raymond's version of the story had been bought by the *Times*. But *Times* hack Peter Foster kept badgering the agency to get "more details" from Mrs Clay, even though the Raymond's hacks pointed out that she was already very upset and agitated.

After falling out with Raymond's, Foster then announced that he was writing an indignant piece on media harassment of the Clay family — apparently forgetting that some of this harassment had been at his behest. Shortly afterwards, Mrs Clay had a call from the *Times*'s picture desk, asking to take photos of the boy and his parents for the article on media harassment. The name of the photographer they were sending was... Doug Marke.

"It's mounted a price war with the Bush Telegraph"

MORALE at Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill's relaunched *European* magazine has sunk even lower with the arrival of a new "editor designate" — his old crony Gerry Malone, the failed Tory politician who had such a spectacular pratfall in the Winchester by-election.

So terrified is Brillo of leaks that he has now forced all staff to sign a lifelong vow of silence. "Both during his employment and after its termination the employee will keep secret and will not use, disclose or divulge to any person or company any of the trade secrets of the company or any confidential knowledge," this fearsome contract states.

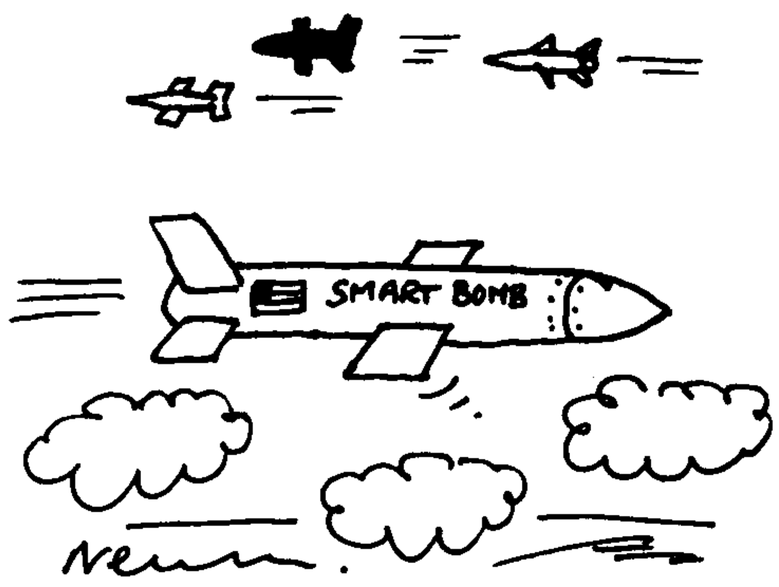
"The employee will also use his best endeavours to prevent the unauthorised publication or disclosure of any such confidential knowledge or information... The employee will not without the prior written consent of the editor-in-chief publish (or cause to be published) any material or give any interview the content of which in either case relates to the company, or any associated company or person."

Phew! The "editor-in-chief" is, of course, Andrew Neill — who recently published a book full of "confidential knowledge or information" acquired during his years at the *Sunday Times*. Its title was, er, *Full Disclosure*.

MEANWHILE, advertising has increased in the *European* since Brillo Pad took charge — free advertising, that is, in the form of editorial puffs.

The 9 February issue had a three-page feature on allegations of industrial espionage by Reuters against its rival in the financial information business, Bloomberg. "Users loved the Bloomberg machines and the after-sales service," the *European* gushed. "Brokers love the forecasting and modelling capabilities of Bloomberg's colourful desk-top devices (price $11,620 a month)." The only thing missing was a cut-out-and-order coupon.

Staff on the business desk who wrote this sycophantic piffle surely deserve a few more free Bloomberg machines — to add to the one they have already used free of charge for the past two years.



"I'm not sure we've really defined the targets, and we might end up reinforcing his position, and we haven't got the international community on board..."

CONGRATULATIONS to the *Observer*'s top investigative sleuths Michael Gillard, Jonathan Calvert and David Connett for their brilliant scoop last Sunday: MOTHER OF 'DODI'S LOVE CHILD' IS EXPOSED AS CON ARTIST. Diane Holliday, they revealed, had managed to con Mohamed Fayed, Tiny Rowland and unnamed "journalists" with her bogus tale.

Indeed. But the intrepid *Observer* trio neglected to mention which extremely ungullible newspaper had run Holliday's story in the first place, thus starting the wild goose chase by all those other journalists.

Step forward, er,... the *Observer*, which on 8 February led its front page with an exclusive headed 'SECRET LOVE CHILD' FOR DODI AS HE WOOED DIANA — written by Michael Gillard, Jonathan Calvert and David Connett.

HACKWATCH

JAMES WHITAKER

JAMES WHITAKER, aka the Fat Red Tomato, announced last November that he was stepping down as the *Mirror*'s "front-line man on the royal beat". Thousands of readers wept uncontrollably — but the *Mirror* consoled them with the news that he was starting a new column, Whitaker's World, which would "put the sparkle in your weekend". Here's the sparkle so far:

22 November 1997: "This is an exciting day for me and, hopefully, for all *Mirror* readers," James announces. "For years, I've been a royals expert... But there's another side to me, a side that few people know about." And he's going to inflict it on us.

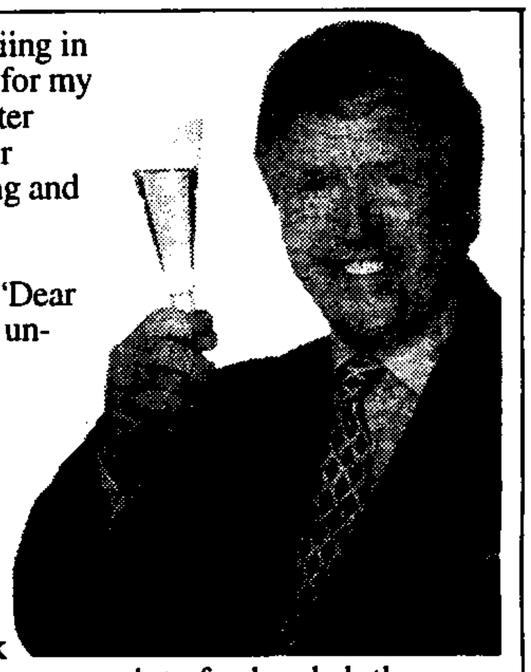
6 December: At Twickenham to watch England play the Springboks, James falls into conversation with a young Guards officer. It turns out to be... Harry Legge-Bourke, brother of Tiggy! "We discussed this and that," he reports triumphantly. "A brief encounter that I enjoyed." As if that weren't enough excitement for one week, James divulges that "I've been around Earl 'Champagne Charlie' Spencer since he was a callow kid at Eton." *Around?* What can he mean?

13 December: A Czech businessman has spent £13,000 on a meal for three at the Gavroche. "It didn't surprise me," James comments knowingly. "For goodness sake, he DID drink Romance Conti, widely regarded as the world's greatest red wine. (In fact, I don't agree.) I'm not quite sure why Viktor Kozeny spent £5,000 on a 1985 vintage, which he sent back as 'too young'. The 1971s, at only £1,000 a bottle, are drinking so much better at the moment." Meanwhile, James has had another gruelling week: "I watched Oxford play Cambridge at Twickers on Tuesday before having my final pre-Christmas shoot yesterday." Oh, and he's been to Tiffany, the upmarket jewellers. "In London," he explains, "it's a joy to be served by girls who speak so beautifully."

20 December: "As I'm no longer a front-line, foot-in-the-door royal reporter, I'm getting my first Christmas Day off in two decades," James informs us. "Traditionally, I serve all photographers and reporters (maybe 40 of them) with my truly superb homemade raspberry vodka and sloe gin." Fascinating!

3 January: "I have just flown to Cologne to star in television station ZDF's end of year show about famous people throughout 1997," James reveals, with customary modesty. Back in London, he's been lunching at "the excellent Causerie restaurant, tucked away in a corner of my favourite hotel, Claridges... I was telling my delightful and extremely pretty lunch companion, Fiona Harris, that King Constantine is a regular (as is Fergie's father, Major Ron) when in he walked. Such a comfort."

10 January: Earl Spencer is in the news again. "I've vaguely known 'Champagne Charlie' since he was a teenager," James reminds us. Meanwhile, he's received some "unpleasant" letters from readers, full of "pathetic whingeing". He has some advice for these malcontents: "Get off your butt and take a couple of breaks. Which is exactly what I'm up to. I'm off to Barcelona for three or four days and then, shortly, I'm off skiing in Zermatt... Watch for my reports, as no matter where I am I never really stop working and writing for your pleasure."



17 January: "Dear Mr Whitaker," an unpleasured reader writes, "how can you sit there spouting about a £2,500 bottle of wine when there are so many people in the world out of work and who don't have enough to feed and clothe themselves?" Quite easily, it seems. "I've had a smashing time in Barcelona," James gloats. "I can't wait for my next break in a few days' time, this time staying in Switzerland. Thank the Lord I'm not poor." To enrage jealous *Mirror* readers still further, he prints a photo of his "glamorous" wife, Iwona.

24 January: "You come across as very arrogant and conceited," a reader observes. "You may be able to afford such a luxurious lifestyle, but there is no need to rub our noses in it." James disagrees. "By the time you poor, deprived people read these fine words, I will be on top of the Matterhorn in Switzerland." Before leaving, he defends his colleague Dawn Alford from an attack by *Telegraph* columnist Kevin Myers. "I find it enlightening," he sneers, "that the *Daily Telegraph* will employ a man with the first name Kevin."

31 January: James makes a rare appearance in the news pages, commenting on the beef ban: "Being a person of some influence, I know somebody who will still serve me sirloin — on the bone." Back in Whitaker's World, there's yet another holiday bulletin from the man of influence. "Zermatt is a wonderfully yob-free zone. It's full of rather grand Europeans staying in old-fashioned, rather grand Swiss hotels." In other words, it's blessedly free of *Mirror* readers. Just as well: "There is a small but noisy bunch of my readers who are beginning to whine more than is good for them," James notes. "Stop whingeing and, as the Yanks would say, *enjoy*." And there's plenty to enjoy this week, including a large photo of the Fat Red Tomato in his skiing gear.

7 February: The sight of 56-year-old Pearl Reed flashing her cleavage brings back "many happy memories of what was regularly one of our best parties of the year during the Seventies and Eighties. I am, of course, referring to the Berkeley Square Ball which took place at the height of the summer and was an occasion I never missed — until the North London hairdressing brigade latched on to it which inevitably ensured it went downmarket." Meanwhile, James's downmarket readers — possibly including North London hairdressers — are still refusing to *enjoy*. "While half of the world's population is starving, your main concern at the moment seems to be where to spend vast sums of money indulging yourself," one complains. "I am writing to ask why you are employed by a paper like the *Mirror*."

Answer comes there none.

MOHAMED FAYED and the *Sun* have teamed up to condemn someone *else's* treatment of Diana as "tasteless": students at Queen's University, Belfast, who produce the rag mag *PTQ*.

This year they printed a page of tacky Diana and Dodi jokes, saying: "Before you send us death threats, we know she would have wanted it this way — after all, it's for charity." There followed the sort of jokes heard in City dealing rooms, parliamentary debating chambers and Wapping newsrooms minutes after her death. Eg: what's the difference between Dodi's driver and George Best? Best could still take corners when he was drunk.

The mag had only been on sale a day when the *Sun*'s Ulster corr Darwin Templeton spotted the item and whipped up a storm (forgetting Rupert Murdoch's gleeful statement that Di's death would save him a fortune in photo fees). A copy found its way to Harrods and Michael Cole, Fayed's absurd mouthpiece, who passed an instant fatwa. "I shall not dignify this disgusting document with a comment," he said before commenting at length that his boss thought the mag "a disgusting piece of work".

The students — none of whom molests shop assistants or takes coke — were done over by local politicos and the university. The mag has been withdrawn and 20,000 copies at £1 each are likely to be pulped — the biggest losers being the charities that would have benefited from the sales.

CEEFUX

MORE problems for Teletext's transcription of the news, where it was recently asked if a "homo sex eurotunnel" should be allowed into the army.

Meanwhile, as war looms in the Gulf, on the *One O'Clock News* Teletext reported the dire warnings of our foreign secretary, "Mr [Robin] Can't Cook Won't Cook". And in Iraq itself there was relief for 63 UN staff who had found sanctuary after leaving the capital, "bag dead dad".

IN THE TEAROOM

BENEATH the scales of justice, the royal cipher, all the symbols of the serene majesty of the law, and beneath his own itchy wig, Mr Justice Cocklecarrot trembles in the dock. And with good cause: no hanging judge was ever so implacable as this lord chancellor fighting for his political survival.

Lord Irvine, having made a complete botch of his first nine months in office, needs rehabilitation. Well before the forced resignation of dotty Judge Harman, he rightly concluded that sacking or pensioning off the greater, reactionary, part of the judiciary and replacing them with media-savvy, "new" Labour supporters would earn him the accolade "great reforming lord chancellor".

If some of the new bottoms on the bench could be black, Asian or female, so much the better. And so while other cabinet ministers are on the *Today* programme, Irvine is already at his desk scouring the bar directory for likely names. Sadly, he cannot afford the great forensic notables of the left who are doing very-nicely-thank-you in private practice — so no lord chief justice "Mike" Mansfield or Geoffrey Robertson; no Helena Kennedy, mistress of the rolls. Still, there are plenty of ambitious middle-rankers who might be tempted into a bigger wig — names like Edward Fitzgerald QC and... er... Cherie Booth.

But what had been a medium-term project is now becoming urgent. With John Redwood after his decorator's bills, Jack Straw and Chris Smith sending tart notes to his red box telling him to keep his nose out of the privacy issue, and David Clark and Peter Mandelson saying he has no right to speak out on freedom of information, Derry Irvine is in trouble. Or, at least, he *thinks* he is.

As an unelected political tyro he is unused to the phenomenon of being "briefed against" by his own colleagues. The line that Irvine is about to be replaced by Lord Williams of Mostyn is just a graffito scrawled on the lobby wall by some hooligan from the home secretary's gang. Tony Blair has not yet passed sentence, the lord chancellor is simply on probation. All Irvine needs to do to survive is promise he will no longer associate with unsavoury types from the *New Statesman* and get on with sacking some more judges.

'Urquhart'

"NEW" Labour's inquiry into the actions of suspended West Renfrewshire MP Tommy Graham have entered a dark new territory.

Graham was suspended for allegedly leading a smear campaign against Gordon McMaster, the late MP for Paisley South who committed suicide and blamed Graham in a suicide letter for bringing on his depression.

That inquiry was going nowhere; but instead of allowing Graham to reenter the party, the traditional "old" Labour man is still being held at arm's length. Indeed, the party has now begun to look into Graham on other unrelated matters, even reopening an inquiry that it had dropped in 1995.

The party seemed to have struck gold when two prominent members in Scotland, "new" Labour fans Jim Stephens and Alan Wilson, stepped forward with allegations that Graham had been touting compromising photographs of a prominent gay trade union official with political aspirations.

Graham has vociferously denied the allegations, calling them "low-life". *Glasgow Herald* columnist and old Labour lag Jimmy Reid suggested a conspiracy. He says he knows the trade unionist in question who makes no secret of his homosexuality but is, incidentally, anti-Blairite.

NORTHERN Ireland secretary Mo Mowlam and her pugnacious economy minister Adam Ingram are trying to staunch continuing redundancies in local manufacturing industry.

Though Ulster's unemployment rate is below that of, say, the Irish Republic, France or Germany, the year started with a stream of lay-offs.

In Londonderry, for example, a company called TransTech Automotive, which makes motor parts with the help of substantial grants from the government's industrial development board, now plans to sack 90 workers, something Mowlam and Ingram could do without. But any suggestion that they are upset with their government colleague Geoffrey Robinson, the paymaster-general, *New Statesman* publisher, befriender of old ladies and TransTech supremo, are wide of the mark.

Since Mr Robinson's shares are in a blind trust, he can no longer influence operations at TransTech (whose tax-sheltered profits should be boosted if part of the workforce is sacked).

High Moral Tony

Then

"What's important is that whatever politicians are doing they are aware there's a certain trust the public have put in them and a certain dignity and responsibility that should go with the job."

Tony Blair interviewed by Piers Morgan in the Mirror, 1.4.97

Now

"I believe what's more important than anything else is that he does a good job as president, and for that he deserves all our support — so it's as simple as that, really."

Tony Blair on Bill Clinton, International Herald Tribune, 4.2.98

TRADE union members at University College London Hospital are fighting plans for a private finance initiative bid. The preferred contractor for the PFI is a consortium led by AMEC, which intends to rebuild and run the hospital for profit.

Can the campaigners expect help from UCLH board member and NHS trust deputy chair Baroness Dean, who used to lead the print union, SOGAT? Probably not.

The busy baroness is also paid £16,000 a year as part-time director of CareFirst, which provides homes and day centres to local authorities. In December last year she and her fellow CareFirst board members recommended that the company sell itself to BUPA — which it did. With BUPA effectively employing one of their board members, staff at UCLH don't expect a fervent opposition to privatisation plans.

LIVERPOOL Riverside MP Louise Ellman was chair of Lancashire county council in 1992 when Castle Cement was allowed to burn 70,000 tonnes of hazardous waste each year in Clitheroe.

It did not need planning permission as the waste was classified as fuel. But it contained benzene, bitumen, plastics, paint, resins and organo-phosphates; and a case brought by two residents against the council for allowing the burning has gone to judicial review.

PS: 19 percent of local children under 11 carry asthma inhalers and the death rate in under-75 year olds is 40 percent above the national average.

PPS: Louise Ellman now sits on the environment select committee.

EMPLOYMENT minister Andrew Smith has trumpeted the offer from "hospitality" firms like Whitbread and Granada to take on subsidised workers under Labour's welfare to work scheme. So what can the jobless look forward to at these companies?

A new starter at Granada Road services is paid £3.67 an hour for a 35-hour week. That equals £128.45 a week. With the £60 government subsidy, Granada will have almost half the wage paid by the scheme. It is a similar story at Whitbread Inns, where a starter earns £121 a week.

Another company eager to join in is caterer Gardner Merchant. Civil servants at the Information Technology Services Agency (ITSA) have bad memories of the firm, which won a three-year contract in 1994 to run their canteens. Nine months into the deal they walked out — "because we couldn't make what we wanted to", the company bluntly told the catering press. The civil servants left without hot dinners were also bemused to hear the company admit that "this sort of thing happens all the time".

The jobless must hope the company shows more commitment to them when the subsidy runs out.

IF "new" Labour is old Conservative writ large, Labour students are fast beginning to resemble the odious Federation of Conservative Students, who eventually became so noxious Norman Tebbit was obliged to close them down.

At their recent annual jamboree the spotty youths were given a training session on "How to get elected to the National Union of Students". This included advanced democratic techniques such as "getting your mates to count the votes" and "manipulating the rules".

On the second day egregious NUS president Dougie Trainer lectured on how to get sponsorship deals from MacDonald's and why higher education was not a priority for the government. To round off he expressed contempt for those who opposed tuition fees (ie most students) saying that if the NUS had to organise a strike he would pencil it in for a Friday so his members could "sit at home and watch the Teletubbies".

As the youths turned their minds to the serious matter of elections, Labour party official Maureen Bosch selected the more promising apparatchiks before submitting them to vote "by a show of hands". The spirit of Red Robbo lives on.

BAILIFFS have moved into the head office of computer giant EDS (*Eyes passim ad nauseam*) at Stockley Park after glitches in EDS's own system resulted in bills going unpaid and legal action being taken by angry creditors.

Since its European Administration Resources System (Ears) went live, 17 county court judgments have been brought against EDS. This was the fault of a new system which is now undergoing repair.

If EDS cannot get its own system right, say industry observers, what hope is there for all the UK companies and government departments that have entrusted their files to the company?

EXPELLED Labour MEP Hugh Kerr is having great trouble finding out what information party apparatchiks are holding on him.

Kerr has written three times to Labour general-secretary Tom Sawyer demanding to see the file on him which he claims is stored on the party's Excalibur rapid rebuttal system in its Millbank offices. No reply has been forthcoming, so Kerr has now written through a solicitor demanding that his file be released and citing the data protection act.

Since Kerr is now a "non person" in the Labour party it is likely his file has already been inserted into the memory hole.

HELEN BRINTON, "new" Labour MP for Peterborough, includes the environment in her list of interests so it was no surprise to see her on 6 February delivering a splendid speech on energy efficiency.

A few minutes after her bout of green rhetoric in the House, however, researchers in parliamentary offices at Derby Gate were astonished to see la Brinton getting out of a taxi that had brought her from the Commons just a few hundred yards away. She certainly knows how to conserve her own energy, anyway.

Number crunchings

£22 million

■ Cost of the new national initiative to reduce primary school class sizes for children aged between 5 and 7

■ Cost of the new Millennium Tower to be built in Portsmouth

WITH stunning timing Bernard Carr, Hartlepool councillor and former election agent to Peter Mandelson, produced "new evidence" on the day he was to go on trial accused of fiddling his council expenses.

Quick as a flash the crown prosecution service (CPS) swung into action and took the brave decision to offer no evidence.

So that's all right then. Funnily enough, much the same thing happened when Mr Carr was up on a charge of gross indecency (see the *Eye* of 9 January).

So Mr Carr is innocent of gross indecency and innocent of fiddling his expenses. The CPS employs 2,093 lawyers. This can ensure that there is always someone on duty so that everyone can enjoy a last-minute reprieve. Even if they are not close associates of the MP for Hartlepool.

Benn and Now

"The flag of racialism which has been hoisted in Wolverhampton is beginning to look like the one that fluttered 25 years ago over Dachau and Belsen."

— Tony Benn in a speech to Students for a Labour Victory, reported in the Times, *4 June 1970.*

"He [Powell] put it in a way that stimulated a lot of very right-wing racist people of whom he was not one."

— Tony Benn interviewed after Powell's death, BBC News, 8 February 1998.

IN an attempt to contain public unease about the increasingly dirty business of fish farming in Scotland, the Scottish Salmon Growers' Association (SSGA) is hiring the pin-up of the disgraced Scottish Tory party, Lord Lindsay, to promote its activities.

A former environment minister, Lindsay is the two-day-a-week, £50,000-a-year vice-chairman of the SSGA. He will have his work cut out. For though the likes of Marks & Spencer, with its "Tartan Quality Mark", might talk of salmon "reared in cold, clear, unpolluted Scottish waters", salmon farming is now a very significant polluter of Scotland's marine environment.

The untreated waste from more than 270 fish farms deposited into the sea is equivalent in volume to the untreated sewage produced by a human population of 250,000. By the year 2000, Scottish salmon farms will be dumping 11,000 tonnes of untreated ammonia into the sea each year.

The Crown Estates commissioners who give the farms planning permission do not order environmental impact assessments on the sites. They do, however, receive around £40 per tonne of salmon produced (£2.5m of their revenue last year).

Compelling evidence that sea lice from farm cages has devastated wild salmon and sea trout populations has been ignored by the Scottish office, even though sport fishing for wild trout and salmon generates an income of more than £50m and employs 5,000 people.

Advertising by Marks & Spencer and other food stores makes no mention that its fish are farm produced and spend their lives swimming in small cages with their own excrement. Instead their sales are backed by pretty pictures of Scottish lochs — lochs where wild salmon stocks have been seriously depleted by the presence of salmon fish farms.

EDUCASHUN

SCHOOLS inspectors who visited St Mary's Church of England First School at Washington, West Sussex, were so impressed with its standards that one inspector commented that St Mary's was, with one other school, the best she had ever visited.

At Ofsted, the chief schools inspector Chris "Excellence" Woodhead duly wrote a personally signed letter to congratulate the head. St Mary's had been chosen, he said, to be included in press publicity for high-achieving schools.

Alas, Ofsted's own standards appear to fall somewhat below those of the average West Sussex eight-year-old. Woodhead's letter was addressed to the head teacher, "Mrs E Earwickker". Her actual name is Mrs Viv Earwicker. The promised press release identified the commended school as St Mary's Primary School, Pulborough — a completely different school 10 miles away.

This was pointed out to Ofsted officials in London, who nevertheless seemed unable to get their heads round the idea that two schools with similar names could exist within the same postal district without being the same school. Perhaps Ofsted should get Level 1 for Spelling, Level 2 for Geography and Level 0 for Systems and Communication.

ATTEMPTS by the Sinn Fein leadership to distance the IRA from the murders of Brendan Campbell and Robert Dougan are unlikely to convince even neutral observers. The murders had quite different motives.

Campbell was a drug dealer who had been attacked twice before since the recent revival of Direct Action Against Drugs, an IRA front organisation.

One of the attacks resulted in a court case in which the prosecution claimed Campbell was a drug dealer whom the IRA hated because he worked with Unionists and had been engaged in a grenade attack on Sinn Fein headquarters. The grenade was traced to a South African arms shipment for loyalist paramilitaries. The prosecution said in court that the attempted assassination of Campbell was because the IRA "would prefer to keep control of the profits" from drug sales.

A few weeks ago, Campbell was shot again, in a pub, surviving only because of his bullet-proof vest. He was not so lucky the third time when he was shot in the head.

Campbell's murder alone could have been explained in terms of the Belfast drug wars. But Dougan's murder was quite different. He was a commander in the paramilitary Ulster Defence Association, and was responsible for at least some of the 18 sectarian killings of Catholics since the latest ceasefire. His killing was intended to be on a "no claim" basis — that is that no one would claim responsibility and nothing could be proved. On this occasion, however, the killers left too much evidence which pointed to the IRA.

'Backbiter'

MASONIC NEWS

THE forcible retirement of Commander Michael Higham as grand secretary of British freemasons (see last *Eye*) may not be unrelated to the scandalous saga of the Royal Masonic Hospital in west London, which was sold to a property developer last year.

It seems that masonic bigwigs from Grand Lodge — including the Duke of Kent, Lords Farnham, Cornwallis, Eglinton etc — want to put as much space as possible between him and them before more details emerge about the "sale".

Until recently the RMH was regarded as one of the better hospitals in the country, located on a large and valuable eight-acre site in Hammersmith. It also held substantial investment and charity funds based on contributions made by the lodges over many decades.

During the past few years, however, it endured ceaseless warfare between the "governors" (thousands of rank-and-file masons who had made donations to the hospital) and the Duke of Kent, its president. "The trouble," according to one mason, "is that the hospital never belonged to Grand Lodge, but Grand Lodge wanted to control it."

In the mid-1980s the duke wanted to sell the site to an American company, but the governors refused. In 1989 he demanded the right to choose a chairman of the governors, and to appoint board members; once again the governors rebuffed him, suspecting it was a ruse to destroy the hospital. Early in 1994 the RMH went into receivership — and the Grand Lodge gang seized the opportunity. Michael Higham proposed that all the hospital's assets should be sold: both the Charities Commission and the receiver agreed. At the time it was estimated that the buildings and land were worth between £15m and £20m.

Here the plot thickens. In 1996 the Friends of the RMH offered to put up £12m to save the hospital; they were turned down. Instead it was sold for just £6m to a Mayfair property developer called Joey Esfandi. Even before completion last summer, Esfandi had already sold the "medical area" alone to a private health company, Bestcare, for £9m. Soon afterwards he sold the nurses' home for another £5m and eight cottages in the grounds for £2.8m, while still holding on to several spare acres.

Why did Michael Higham and his Grand Lodge colleagues acquiesce in this amazing bargain? More light may be shed on the mystery by several pending lawsuits brought by rank-and-file masons — which may explain Higham's hasty departure.

SINN FEIN: TALKS LATEST

TV

Winter Olympics '98 (BBC1/2)
International Football (Sky Sports 1)
International Cricket (Sky Sports 2)

THE truly revealing thing about the competitor disqualified from the Winter Olympics in Nagano for using marijuana is that, whereas athletes generally get in to trouble for taking performance-enhancing drugs, this bloke took a mood-enhancing one. Has there ever been more convincing evidence of what a depressing event the Winter Olympics are?

The people in the BBC Sports department must be in a particularly gloomy mood. Having lost out on most of the big events to Rupert Murdoch or ITV — 1998 is the first season that the BBC won't be showing the FA Cup Final — the Wood Lane gang are forced to make an even greater fuss about what's left.

The problem is that the Winter Olympics have become ever more irrelevant. When the Olympic committee shifted them to a different quadrennial rotation from the summer games, the aim was to raise their profile. In fact, the effect has been to render them nearly redundant. Whereas they once served to herald another Olympic year, they have now been moved smack in to the path of such other huge four-yearly events as the football World Cup and the West Indies v England test series. In an eloquent gesture of contempt, the top newspaper sportswriters are ostentatiously staying away from the 1998 games.

But the poor old BBC — having actually won the rights, mainly because no one wanted them — is stuck with hours of coverage. Unfortunately bad weather wiped out most of the skiing — the one really big TV sport on offer here — during the first week. It had never really occurred to execs that winter sports could be snowed off and the programmes began to show a sense of strain.

Thus, for example, BBC peak-time last weekend was unexpectedly devoted to women's curling. Giving the distinct impression that the autocue had started printing Japanese, Steve Rider and Sue Barker — canny old Des has taken a snow-check from this engagement — struggled with the impenetrable jargon of this obscure Scottish sport: "Britain was five-all going in to the seventh end! We join it with four stones remaining!"

Barker and Rider did their best to liven things up by occasionally yelling come-ons like "History was made today at the bobsleigh track!" But it was embarrassingly clear that the BBC had bought a pup or, given the temperatures, a seal pup.

Adding to the problems was that, in the period when the BBC was trying to attract interest to this pointless and tedious spectacle, Sky Sports had an England international, an FA Cup tie, a Caribbean test match and numerous other glamorous games. And — whisper it — they did them very well.

Ten years ago, BBC Sport enjoyed both moral and technical superiority over Sky. Both of these claims are now fading fast. At the level of presentation, the satellite approach still has irritating elements. For example, the stupid bloody little duck which they still insist on putting on the scorecard when batsmen have scored 0 and the apparently contractual swaggering of its anchormen who will breathlessly insist that even a Monday night scrap between two long-ball Premier League under-achievers is a "potential thriller".

Yet, beyond these blips, many of the Sky personnel — principally Mark Nicholas and Michael Holding from the cricket squad and Andy Gray and Martin Tyler from the football team — would be high on the BBC shopping list if the corporation had either the money to seduce them or the events for them to introduce. When Channel 5 screens one of the high-profile football matches signed up out of ratings desperation, the coverage is incompetent and irritating. With Sky Sports these days, it's going at the very least to be efficient and is frequently high-class. The only card the BBC can play against the satellite channel now is access not technique.

Even on the access question, the BBC's moral superiority is becoming increasingly questionable. Traditionally there have been two main objections to Rupert Murdoch's potential domination of televised sport: viewer blackmail and cherry-picking. The first of these still holds. The Digger has indeed snatched most of the popular events from terrestrial television and forced those interested to purchase dishes. In the process of doing this, he has introduced a ruinous culture of greed to Premier League football and led to a serious reduction in crowds at smaller clubs whose matches clash with big televised ties.

The cherry-picking accusation, though, is now impossible to sustain. The night before the England v Chile football international at Wembley, Sky screened live the whole of the "B" team tie between the reserves of the two countries on a muddy Midlands pitch. At close of play in the West Indies, cricket viewers were offered highlights of South Africa v Pakistan.

The BBC would never have had the channel space, the finance or the instinct to offer such a variety of events. Horrible though it is to admit, Murdoch's sports channels use cross-subsidy (that old Digger trick) from the attractive fixtures to offer what is effectively public service broadcasting of minority interest material.

The Digger isn't all altruistic. The anorak-interest fixtures are probably there to deflect criticism when pay-per-view is finally introduced for the hot stuff. But, as the BBC struggled to fill the space left by the unfortunate snowing-off of the Winter Olympics, the scale of its fall in sports coverage was cruelly exposed.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

BBC news supremo Tony "Head Prefect" Hall has notched up another triumph — this time in Delhi.

The corporation's TV news service in Hindi, nationally broadcast throughout India, closed last December after a disastrous 11-month run which lost the BBC £1.5m. Hall was then dispatched to negotiate with cash-rich Sony TV, with a view to reviving the programme in time for the Indian elections. But he dilly-dallied for so long that Sony gave up.

The result? Andy "Sincere" Whitehead, who was to edit the new operation, found himself without a job on arrival, while about a dozen other staff were also made redundant with little or no prospect of being absorbed elsewhere by the Beeb. Most of them are Indians who were forced to leave their jobs at Bush House and lured to Delhi on wages lower than those paid to expats, with promises of working on an exciting new TV venture.

"Head Prefect" has now damaged the BBC's reputation in Asia still further by deciding to merge BBC World's English-language service with the pisspoor News 24 between the hours of 1am and 5am — when millions of viewers across Asia, particularly in the Indian sub-continent, are watching.

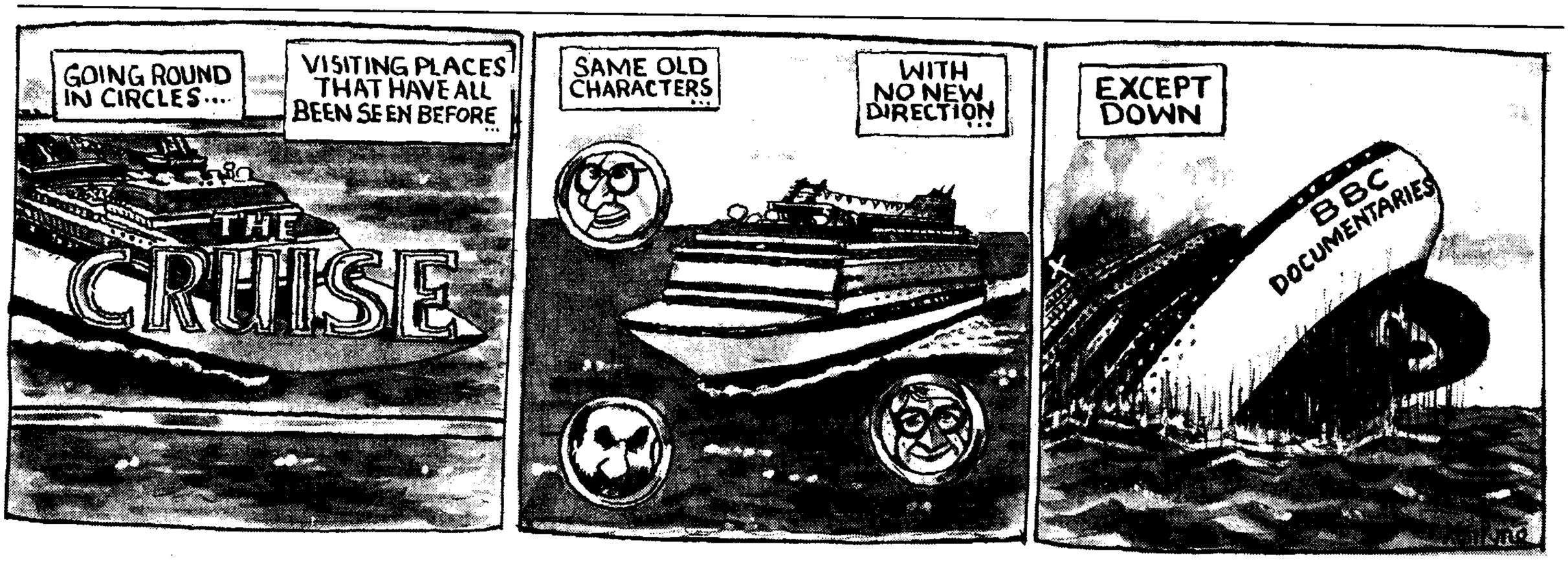
The fourth-rate hacks on News 24 are hard pressed to keep up with local news, let alone international stories. Equipped with an expensive but unusable computer system, editing equipment that doesn't work and a high percentage of staff who have never worked in television, the channel looks and feels worse than a two-bit local TV station in Budleigh Salterton. Nevertheless, from 1 April viewers in Calcutta or Colombo will be treated to endless updates about M25 traffic jams and late football scores from the Vauxhall Conference league.

This seems calculated to make Asian audiences defect *en masse* to Rupert Murdoch — whose Star TV, by curious coincidence, has just started broadcasting a 24-hour Hindi/English news channel.

BBC TV boss Alan Yentob has been offered another job. And though he might be expected to leap at the chance to escape the Birtist terror, he is in a terrible quandary.

The job in question is creative director of the Millennium Dome, which would entail working for Peter Mandelson — the only employer in Britain even more unpopular and megalomaniac than John Birt.

True to form the ever-indecisive Botney can't decide what to do. One can only hope he makes his mind up sometime before new year's eve next year.



ALMOST all the 700 shareholders who attended the recent Granada agm were hugely impressed by the year-round tan of handsome chairman Gerry Robinson. The only real complaint was about the catering.

Several angry ladies protested that in the "old days" they could expect something tasty to eat. Now all they got was weak coffee and no biscuit. And what was Robinson before he came to Granada? Why, a caterer of course!

These complaints penetrated the more serious debates: as when Anne Simpson, of the corporate governance watchdog PIRC, noted a proposal to pay Granada directors "compensation" of £375,000 for the agony of converting from three-year rolling contracts (that's three years' pay up front if anyone takes over Granada) to two-year contracts. Ms Simpson suggested, to prolonged cheers, that the money could perhaps be spent on improving refreshments — and buying a large gin and tonic for every shareholder.

When, however, she opposed the reelection to the board of Mr John Ashworth, a member of the remuneration committee which had proposed paying out such huge compensation to the directors, she was less rapturously received. On a show of hands an overwhelming majority voted for Mr Ashworth to be reelected and endorsed the directors' generosity to themselves. When the proxy votes were counted, the picture was rather different. Twenty percent of shareholders voted against, and a further 12 percent formally abstained — the biggest shareholders' revolt against directors' fat-cattery in recent times.

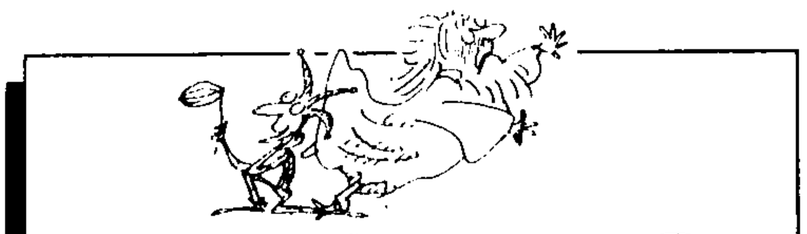
Robinson's justification for paying himself so much money was as follows: "When contracts are changed there is always compensation." Er, not quite always. Granada employees sacked by Robinson when he took over remember the "compensation" for a 15 percent fall in average salaries after 1995: the delight of watching the chairman's salary rise by 15 percent to more than half a million.

BACK in 1996 Oscar-winning animator Bob Godfrey thought he had a cracking idea for the millennium dome exhibition — a half-hour humorous cartoon film depicting 1,000 years of British history.

At less than two seconds per year, Godfrey and his partner John Simmons reckoned this modern version of *1066 And All That* wouldn't be too taxing for even the gnat-like attention span of millennial yoof.

Godfrey, who won an Oscar and MBE in the 1980s for *Great*, his animated life of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, submitted a detailed proposal in the summer of 1996. It was warmly welcomed by Jennie Page, head of the Millennium Experience Company. Godfrey and Simmons were told it was being "reviewed" by the dome's "implementation committee". The film-makers received sufficient encouragement to assemble a team of 60 young artists for the painstaking work involved.

After the change of government the project received further nods and winks from dome secretary Peter "Mandy" Mandelson's staff in the form of two encouraging letters and a phone call in November telling Godfrey and Simmons it was "shortlisted". In the new year, however, the film-makers pointed out that nearly two years had gone by without a decision. At the beginning of February, they received a formal letter saying the idea was "one we felt unable to take forward".



LUVVIES

"Whatever it is that dictates the individual about you is the one thing you should keep. I don't wear eyeliner any more, but the bit of me that did is the bit that I lost for a while and that I've been desperately clawing my way back towards."

RUFUS SEWELL
Sunday Times Magazine

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

HARD CHOICES
Greenwich Theatre (closing 1998 having lost grant of £210,000)
Greenwich Dome (opening 2000 having cost £758,000,000)
PUBLIC FUNDING
Y

ANGLIA NEWS promises a news programme that is "closer to home" — but only, it seems, if the story isn't *too* close to home.

When national newspapers picked up on the angry ex-husband who had poured paint and creosote over a Mercedes belonging to his former wife's new lover, East Anglians eagerly looked for this local story, complete with pictures, on the TV news.

The incident happened outside the couple's £250,000 country house in South Burlingham, Norfolk, putting it firmly on Anglia's doorstep. But strangely the evening bulletin carried no mention of the spat.

Presumably the story of Mike Flynn (the paint thrower), his ex-wife Jacque and her new lover Alan Newton wasn't strong enough to beat the normal cat-stuck-up-a-tree local stories. Which must have been a relief to Anglia programme editor, er, Alan Newton.

9.00 THE AMBASSADOR. (Widescreen) Nine Tenths of the Law. (T) (S)
9.50 NEWS; WEATHER. (T)
10.05 THE UNIQUE DAVE ALLEN. Horror.
10.35 RUBY WAX MEETS... HELEN MIRREN

Hello!

LIBRARY NEWS

GUILDHALL librarians were thrilled to hear a few years ago that the Corporation of London, which dishes out their funding, had agreed to contribute towards one of the pavilions at the millennium festival in Greenwich — a small gesture costing a mere £6m.

But they were less thrilled to read a memo marked "Expenditure Reduction 1998-99" in which cuts of £1.2m had been earmarked by the corporation's policy and resources committee. Measures include raising £108,000 extra income by increasing library charges at more than the rate of inflation.

Although the memo says there will be no redundancies, it does anticipate a saving of £60,000 from "a reduction in staff expenditure... by restructuring in various areas". Another nasty surprise was that Guildhall Library would save £28,000 by "reducing the number of staff available on Saturdays and by closing on all Saturdays around Bank Holidays".

WORLD OF SICKOES

ANOTHER American execution has provoked violent stirrings in the strange mind of erstwhile pop singer Johnny November, now better known as Jeff McGowan, editor of a David Sullivan rag called *The Scottish Sport*.

On 4 February, as penitent pick-axe murderer Karla Faye was killed by lethal injection at Huntsville state penitentiary, her victim's husband exulted at the news: "Here she comes, baby doll. She's all yours. The world's a better place."

This was not enough to satisfy McGowan, who ordered the *Sport*'s chief sub Dave Beevers to write into the story an extra "quote" from the husband — invented by McGowan himself. "I want him to say, 'She'll get the shit kicked out of her in Heaven'," he decreed.

Beevers wrestled with his conscience. How could he placate the boss without libelling the husband? The solution was on view the next morning on page 18 of the *Scottish Sport*: "Another relative said, 'She'll get the sh*t kicked out of her in Heaven...' "

This isn't the first time McGowan's morbid enthusiasms have run away with him. Three years ago he ordered freelance hack John Burke-Davies to "sprinkle some star dust" on an agency story about convicted murderer Nicholas Ingram, who was due to be electrocuted in Atlanta, Georgia at midnight GMT — five hours after the *Sport*'s deadline.

"Three executioners each pressed a button, one of which triggered an electrical surge of 2000 volts into Ingram," Burke-Davies reported. "As his body went into spasm, his back arched and his skin began to stretch. But the current continued, his flesh began to smoulder and the jail lights dipped..."

Alas! Ingram won a 24-hour reprieve shortly after the *Sport* went to press and was still alive when this graphic account of his demise hit the streets.

Diana balls

"Well done — the supplement on Diana, Princess of Wales was so tastefully handled. And it wasn't just placed inside the magazine to fall out all over the floor, but was sealed in a plastic cover. I think it showed the respect she so rightly deserved."

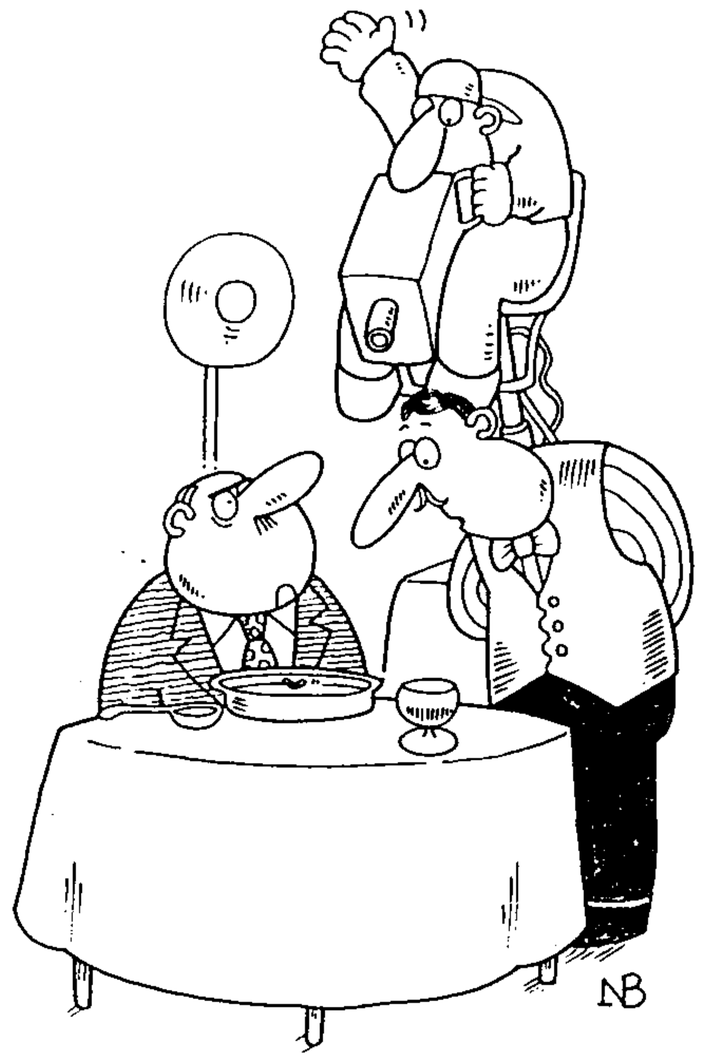
— Letter in Bella *(submitted by J. P. O'Brien).*

"In a tribute to the Princess, Mr Tomato's 'Thoughtful Themes' Souvenir Seed Division has prepared a special mixture of 14 different white flower varieties in a single commemorative packet, tastefully adorned with the Princess and an original 'Meadow of Memories' watercolor. The packet gives gardeners an opportunity to create a special mood of quiet reflection in a corner of their own gardens — a tangible way to share what was special in the Princess's life. Suggested retail: $2.99."

— Leaflet from Mr Tomato Ltd ("the gardening innovators") of Winnipeg.

"Now Open. Princess of Hearts Balti and Tandoori. Full Licensed Restaurant. 15% Discount on takeaways."

— Advert in South Manchester Reporter *(submitted by Robert Howe).*



"Yes, sir, we're making a fly-in-the-soup documentary"

DOING THE ROUNDS

SO Sir Leslie Turnberg's strategic review of London's health services has saved Barts — hardly a huge surprise given shadow health spokesman Chris Smith's pre-election pledge to do the same. Smith, alas, failed to check with Gordon Brown before opening his mouth and was swiftly kicked off to culture (*Eyes passim*).

However, as a specialist cardiac and cancer centre, it remains to be seen if Barts will have an open door to patients. At present those who are discharged after treatment and develop emergency problems requiring urgent readmission have to be taken to, say, St Thomas' where there is no record of their treatment and all investigations have to be repeated. Hardly ideal.

The feelgood headlines about Barts also detracted from the overall message: that healthcare in the capital is still in a parlous state five years on from Sir Bernard Tomlinson's review, laughably entitled "Making London Better". London's hospitals are "under enormous pressure"; primary care is "woeful"; community care "lags behind"; and mental health services are "seriously deficient".

Since Tomlinson, London has lost 9,271 beds in total, 2,761 of which were for emergencies. The theory was that if enough money were pumped into primary care (£265m from the London Initiative Zone), far more patients could be treated in their communities and wouldn't require hospital admission.

Alas, giving GPs more resources often means they discover more problems requiring more hospital treatment. Also, Tomlinson's prediction that referrals to the capital from outside would fall was woefully wide of the mark (2,800 beds are still occupied by non-Londoners).

Another reason demand for hospital beds in London has continued is that London's primary care has been so poor for so long that many patients prefer to go straight to hospital. Half London's GPs work from premises that fail to meet minimum standards, a lot still practise singlehandedly and very few newly-qualified GPs relish the challenge of the capital.

GP numbers in London have fallen by 1 percent since Tomlinson, but in England as a whole they have risen by 6 percent. Community nurses are also perilously thin on the ground, as is community support for those with mental illness. As a result, psychiatric hospital bed occupancy rates are often 125 percent and it's often impossible to get psychotic patients admitted. Health secretary Frank Dobson has promised £30m extra next year for mental health in the capital, but the money is meaningless if the staff don't want to work there.

● THE first recommendation of the report into the cervical screening fiasco in Kent and Canterbury (eight women dead and 250,000 smears to be rechecked) is that we need a national strategy to improve understanding of screening. MD has no wish to condone tragic incompetence, but interpretation of slides of cervical smears is far from clear cut and simple.

A decade ago efficient quality control was not in place in many labs, and poorly paid, overworked screeners had five minutes to interpret what were often very complex cell patterns. As a result there are potentially 20 or more labs around the country where, if the work they were doing 8 or 10 years ago were rigorously examined, it would be no different to Kent and Canterbury. Given media and legal interest, it is likely these centres will be exposed over the next few years.

Though screeners remain overworked and under enormous time pressure, all labs now operate double-check and safety net procedures and, thanks to this, overall the incidence of cervical cancer deaths has fallen. Even with immaculate screening it cannot be eradicated completely, though, given the unpredictability of some forms of the cancer; but a greater problem is that just as most labs are getting it right, the adverse press surrounding earlier low standards makes it difficult to recruit high quality technicians. Again, Mr Dobson may throw money at the problem, but if no one wants the job the programme will be stuffed. Then see what happens to cervical cancer rates.

M.D.

SIGNAL FAILURES

Focus on Virgin Trains

WHEN Virgin won the West Coast franchise (London-Manchester-Glasgow) some rivals wondered how on earth it could maintain and modernise the service on so little subsidy. One year later, we, and the BBC's *Panorama*, have the answer. Er, it couldn't.

Virgin's bid apparently depended on huge cost-cutting in the first year and continuously blaming the inherited infrastructure and equipment for the resulting chaos. The strategy suited the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising (Opraf), which was interested in money before anything else.

Branson's axe first fell on the staff. One station worker told the *Eye*: "It soon became apparent they were a cut-price organisation. They expect people to do two or sometimes three jobs for the price of one. The majority of people who have gone are those who have plenty of experience and can tell them where they are going wrong. All they want are 'yes' people. The average age on Virgin has dropped like a stone."

The resulting benefits to Virgin (senior staff took much higher pay under BR's grading structure than juniors) are as obvious as the disbenefits to customers. On no other line are experienced heads needed more than on the busy West Coast route where poor track, signals and trains cause constant problems.

PS: Asking for an extra £1.2bn subsidy was not the first measure adopted by London & Continental Railways (in which Virgin has a 17 percent share) to try to save its flawed bid for the Channel tunnel rail link. L&CR, which was granted the Eurostar operation and assets as part of its deal, has failed to introduce services which would allow various parts of Britain to benefit from the huge public sums invested in the tunnel project.

BR was committed to introducing overnight trains from British regions to various destinations in mainland Europe. Millions of pounds were spent on new luxury sleeping cars for overnight services. L&CR quietly dumped the commitment because they would not make enough dosh. The sleeping cars, never used, lie abandoned in sidings.

Daytime Channel tunnel services from Manchester, Edinburgh and other provincial cities have still not been introduced by L&CR. There is now a suggestion the Eurostar trains built for them at great public expense may be used temporarily for the West Coast franchise operated by... Virgin.

'Dr B. Ching'

Number crunchings

96%

■ Increase in subsidy paid to rail operating companies since privatisation

■ Increase in overall number of complaints about rail services received by operating companies during third quarter of 1997

DOWN ON THE FARM

THE metropolitan media have worked themselves into a state of excitement over the admission that Maffia scientists first privately recognised the existence of BSE more than a year before they publicly acknowledged the disease in November 1986.

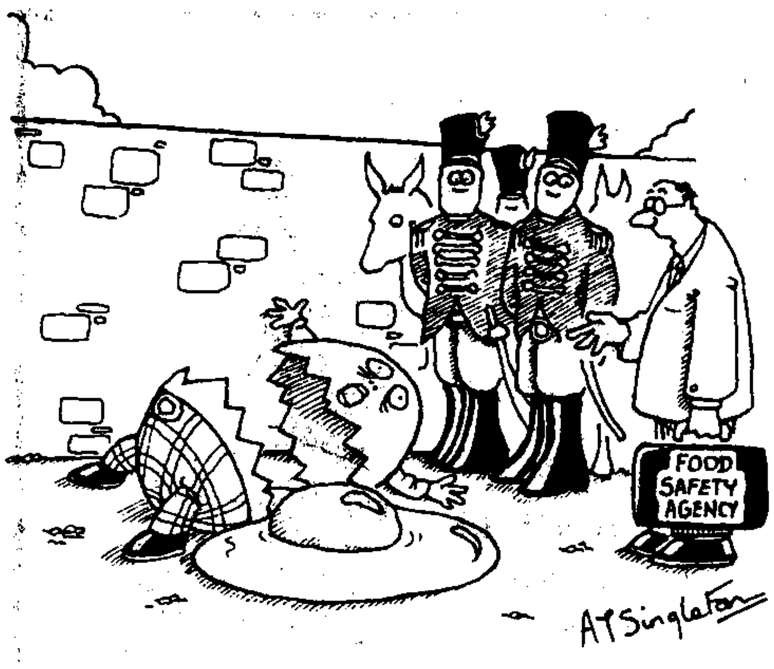
But here in the country it is hard to get worked up about such old news. The mystery is not why it took the Maffia so long to make its identification of BSE public, but why it took the ministry so long to pick up on a disease which had been puzzling vets and farmers in various parts of the country from the late 1970s onwards.

The significant point is what this says about the CJD epidemic that we were told in March 1996 to expect. Remember the doomsday scenario of Prof Lacey and the *Observer* — that by 2015, 500 people would be dying each week and the Channel tunnel would be blocked with concrete to stop crazed CJD victims fleeing to France? Well, every time the date of BSE's onset is pushed back, the more our attention is focused on what has really happened to all those millions of people who ate "infected" beef in the years before it was taken out of the food chain.

If there really is a BSE/CJD link, even on the most extreme estimates of a likely incubation period we should now be seeing a sharp rise in new-variant CJD cases among those who ate beef in the early to mid-1980s. But, as becomes ever more embarrassingly obvious, the graph is simply refusing to move in the right direction.

Despite scientists' efforts to track down the new victims who alone can guarantee the continuation of their grants, the figure has been obstinately stuck at 23 for months. The evidence "Sir" John Pattison, of the spongiform encephalopathy advisory committee (SEAC), is looking for is not there. Even he now admits that the "epidemic" he once agreed on *Newsnight* might kill "500,000 people" will never happen.

This monstrous series of scientific and political blunders leaves behind a huge bill, much of it still to be paid. Our beef and meat industries, propped up until now on a flood of subsidies, head for final meltdown. Our tax bill has been swollen by £5bn — more than £200 for every household in the country. The only consolation is the faintly entertaining spectacle of "Mad Doctor" Cunningham, the agriculture minister, being universally ridiculed for his heroic bid to stamp out the "T-bone steak terror" solely to appease Brussels into lifting a ban it had no intention of lifting anyway.



"Of course, if he'd been hard boiled this never would have happened..."

● A PATRIOTIC "British beef is best" campaign in *Farmers Weekly* has angered the Safeway supermarket chain, described as giving "least support to British beef producers".

Safeway chairman David Webster was not happy, but after consulting lawyers decided not to issue a writ. It may not be the end of the matter, however. Coincidentally, Webster is also a non-executive director of Reed Elsevier, owner of *Farmers Weekly*.

PS: The *Farmers Weekly* staff canteen, run by Sutcliffe Catering at Reed's offices in Sutton, Surrey, reassures diners that all beef on sale is... Irish.

● MAFF has announced the reappointment of David Thomas to the Council of Food from Britain, a quango which exists to promote British food at home and abroad.

Fact 1: David Thomas is chief executive of Whitbread plc.

Fact 2: Whitbread owns the Beefeater restaurant chain.

Fact 3: Farmers have staged sit-down protests in Beefeater restaurants because the patriotically-named chain continues to use... meat from Argentina.

'Even Newer Muckspreader'

Rotten Boroughs

Labour sleaze

TONY BLAIR's announcement that anti-sleaze commissioners are to hunt out town hall corruption will set the country's rotten boroughs trembling. Might the *Eye* suggest some Labour councils where the sleazebusters could start work?

Labour-controlled **Islington**, until recently Blair's home, has cocked up its finances so badly it must now hold a public meeting to explain why £1m is missing from its accounts.

Council officers are resorting to desperate measures. To stop their council tax breaking through the £1,000 mark in band D, which would make Islington the most expensive place to live in Britain, they have scrapped a payment of £1m to their own pension fund. Robert Maxwell would have been proud of them.

Meanwhile in **Reading**, where the Labour council rightly criticised the "fat cat" salaries of undeserving public servants appointed by the Tory government, Labour councillors have been strangely quiet about the behaviour of Reading East Labour MP Jane Griffiths, who is still a councillor in Abbey ward.

Since the general election she has attended three council meetings for a total duration of 3 hours 28 minutes. She has still managed to claim £1,589.98 in attendance allowances. Interestingly she recently appeared in the *Local Government Chronicle* opposing the idea of full-time councillors. They would receive a handsome salary of around £40,000 a year — peanuts compared to £953,000 a year pro rata for *her* council work.

Labour-controlled **Camden** has advertised for two new officers to collect several hundred thousand pounds in poll tax arrears from more than 2,000 locals. But the council shouldn't be too hard on the late payers. They're probably just following the lead of senior Labour councillor John Mills, who ran a company from his Camden Town flat without paying business rates until 1992, when his wife Barbara became director of public prosecutions, and then managed to get away with not paying £24,000 he had owed in rates (never mind poll tax) by hiding behind poll tax legislation which wiped out outstanding rate debts.

PS: Deputy prime minister John Prescott, who has also joined the attack on local sleaze, should know all about it. His chum, former **Hull** lord mayor John Black, has been dropped from the panel of hopefuls looking for selection as candidates for next May's council elections.

Black, as the *Eye* has revealed over the last two years, was suspended by the Labour party and the council's Labour group after a police inquiry into junketing during his year as civic head. Black and supporters strenuously denied wrongdoing when the *Eye* claimed he had spent £42,000 on piss-ups while mayor. Black is no longer saying much now that Knacker has passed on results of his investigation to the crown prosecution service.

Red Face of the Week

CANTERBURY's Tory leader Marion Attwood has failed in her demand that all continental visitors to the city should take a lefthand side of the road driving test. She has, however, persuaded the council to consider translating car park notices into French and German because the parking of people from France and Germany "leaves a lot to be desired".

PS: Attwood recently drove into the Guildhall car park, misjudged the turn and reduced the cones and fencing outside to rubble.

Burgher King

ONE rotten borough where Tony Blair's minions have taken action is Glasgow: lord provost Pat Lally and deputy Alex Mosson have been suspended from holding office or attending group meetings. But "new" Labour's reasons for suspending the "old" Labour pair are far from clear.

Pat "Tin Pan" Lally claims the inquiry by the NCC (national constitutional committee) into allegations of local sleaze amount to no more than backstairs gossip by colleagues "who should be ashamed of themselves".

Some grounds for the suspension have recently been given, although only via leaks to the local Scottish press. One gripe is that Lally exercises undue influence on the office of the Labour group leader and several committees, particularly roads and transportation. This is odd since as lord provost he is a member of all standing committees and his crime against roads and transport was to ask why the cost of the council chauffeur service had risen from £9.65 an hour to £31.

Lally was also meant to have failed to acknowledge the authority of the Labour group whip and the NEC. The evidence? Two internal letters of complaint he sent to the group secretary. He is accused too of failure to adopt standards required in public life when visiting the Edinburgh tattoo in a cavalcade of limos (see *Eyes passim*).

Bad indeed — but it had been happening for years without Labour HQ ever raising an eyebrow. Even an opponent of Lally's in the Labour group concedes: "It's as if the NCC were clutching at straws."

Lally has never been far from controversy since he won his Kingston seat in 1966. He lost it in 1969 to a Tory but was soon back in Hutchesontown. In the early 70s he became the deputy group leader, but he and his boss Dick Dynes publicly clashed on the eve of the 1977 elections and both paid the price — voters turfed them out. Three years later Lally bounced back and became treasurer, then group leader and, in 1996, lord provost.

Whether the irrepressible Lally can bounce back again depends on his success at proving himself "clean". But a recent opinion poll showing that 70 percent of Glaswegians want him to resign indicates that "new" Labour has won its Scottish battle.

Bent

TORY councillors Vanessa Howells and Peter Nelke have been deselected from the list of approved candidates for May's elections. Their crime? Giving evidence against colleagues in an inquiry into a suspect planning application.

This incurred the wrath of the Tory group and its leader Bob Blackman, who shortly afterwards had Nelke and Howells deselected. The pair had given evidence to the ombudsman, who was inquiring into a donation to the local Tory party from a developer who was, at the same time, given planning permission for a contentious application.

Two councillors criticised during the ombudsman's investigation, Bill Duffin and David Torbert, have not stood for reselection. Conservative central office has ordered shamefaced Bent Tories to reinstate Nelke and Howells on the list of approved candidates.

Pseuds Corner

Like all the best Massive Attack tracks this one ended as I imagine my own life will end: with a horrendous breakdown in the syncopation of the heart, a series of flailing, intermittent thuds, then the silence of the grave.

WILL SELF
Times

We are a team oriented, patient-needs type of service committed to the concept that every person who enters our practice can become independent of the dentist. We believe we can achieve this by motivating, encouraging and inspiring our patients to become actively involved in preventive dentistry rather than the traditional "passive" patient role. In start we believe each person can become their own dentist.

Mission Statement: Wendover Dental Practice

Duck
Malcolm and Fiona

Duck-Malcolm (Og) Donald Lowther, disgorged, December 28, 1997, producer Fiona Duck, wine maker, Malcolm Duck. This is the second wine from the Duck's of Lennox Street, Edinburgh.

Birth Announcements: The Scotsman

Stuart Cosgrove once accused me of having a "pornographic lust for knowledge" — a raving epistemophiliac, driven by working-class intellectual insecurity (takes one to know one, Cozzy). Well, there they are, three full walls of absolute theoretical filth — everyone from Adorno to Zizek, everything from anarchism to antisyzygy, and I bet you fuckin' don't have as many, gentle bourgeois reader.

My bro and I piled up the shelves at random, *One-Minute Manager* nestling next to *The Restoration of New World Slavery* abutting *The Boy Looked at Johnny*. It's all so dazzlingly jumbled, like a Borges library rack, that I almost don't want to sort it out.

A definitive 1998 moment, though: the first books to be alphabetised, made into a utility, are the pop-science ones — Darwin, genome, fractal. Derrida, Saussure, Williams, Baudrillard are still in their boxes.

PAT KANE
New Statesman

Stephen: The first thing I cooked for her was at my flat in Brighton, which in those days had a very good fish market. We bought a sea bass — it was before it became such a cliché.

Flo: The first meal was probably in my flat and painfully simple, like Kenyan long thin green beans and bacon and a nice piece of cheese...I almost always do the shopping, but I don't dislike it. And I have to think about what the children are going to eat. Stephen would always come back with madly recherché things — one snipe or oyster mushrooms...

STEPHEN BAYLEY AND HIS WIFE FLO
Time Magazine

The St John's Ambulance will provide first aid, and a seamstress will be on hand in the cloakroom to deal with any last-minute clothing crises. Even the portaloos will be of the highest quality, incorporating toiletries, full length dress mirrors, brass fittings and society magazines.

PETERHOUSE MAY BALL COMMITTEE

CONTRIBUTORS: Tony Barrell, Nick Young, Everyone, Howard Knight, Alan Connor, Catherine Feeny, Penny Bustin.

£10 paid for entries.

NOOKS AND CORNERS

IN THE bad old days of British Rail, station buildings were always at risk as they were regarded as surplus to requirements. Why maintain and pay rates on a solid structure of brick or stone when all that was needed was a little glass box like a bus shelter on a windy platform?

When BR wanted to close a line it boarded up the old station and let it become derelict to deter potential passengers. Since privatisation, of course, things are different. Railtrack proudly announces that it is spending millions catching up with long-overdue maintenance on big urban stations — and squeezing in a few more retail units to boot. But what of country stations? North Walsham station in Norfolk is a good example of the policy pursued by the inheritor of BR's huge property portfolio.

North Walsham is about half-way on the old Great Eastern Railway's line from Norwich to Cromer, opened in 1876. It has solid red-brick buildings either side of the tracks, each with a generous platform canopy supported on cast-iron columns and trimmed with characteristic saw-tooth timber valances. Not listed and possibly not listable, it is nevertheless a typical piece of Victorian railway architecture: solid, practical, sensible. Furthermore it is virtually untouched: the fireplace is still in the first class waiting room and the doors have ornamental glass panels with lettering. It is the sort of building which, if surplus to requirements, could easily be put to other use.

So what is Railtrack Property going to do with the buildings? Why, demolish them. The windows are boarded and surrounded with wire fencing. "All Trains Stop Here," it says on the platform, lest anyone think the line is closed. On a noticeboard plans are pinned up to show the travelling public what is to replace the Victorian buildings. "Railtrack are proposing to make improvements to North Walsham Station. The plan is to demolish the existing life-expired buildings and replace with new, good quality waiting shelters using existing materials where possible."

What this means is a pair of glass bus shelters slapped on the windswept platforms. Admittedly these aren't like the old glass boxes BR left around. These, designed as recently as 1995, incorporate some of the old cast-iron columns and a bit of old brickwork, and have wooden valances at the top to create an authentic railway heritage image — past and future synthesised in one cynical gesture.

There is no evidence the Victorian buildings are in any way "life-expired". In fact, to protect passengers from the weather they are more effective than bus shelters. All they need is repair and reuse. But we can't expect a private monopoly like Railtrack to waste money on rates and maintenance, can we?

MEANWHILE, at Brian's Institute of Architecture, morale continues to drop. The new head of school, "Ady" Gale, is probably right to want to move out of the smart (and potentially profitable) Crown Estate buildings in Gloucester Gate and into an old warehouse, but the institute only has money for one more year and the new safely non-architectural council is only interested in streamlining Brian's interests into one Prince of Wales Foundation for the Built Environment.

So what does Britain's Royal Maecenas, that would-be patron in the tradition of Charles I and George IV, think about this? Last year he insisted the institute's graduate programme would not close. It has now been shut by the council, which did nothing to save *Perspectives* ***— an admirable magazine despite the royal white feathers on the cover.***

In fact the shots are now called by Mrs Parker-Bowles, what with her divorce lawyer Lady Browne-Wilkinson (the ex-Mrs Barry Tuckwell) as the (paid) chairman of the council, and things being run by the prince's new adviser, handsome bachelor Mark Bolland via helpful press releases from Lowe Bell Communications.

The document I long to see is the charity commissioners' report on how the former council under the capable direction of someone called Lord Morris of Morris got through quite so much of the money Brian raised. Surely it cannot have been £13m?

'Piloti'

Letters

Private Eye

Lord 'R' soul

Sir,

Piloti's otherwise excellent article on the Scottish Parliament building in EYE *943 consistently mis-spelt the location of the Old Royal High School. "Edinburgh Carlton" is a parliamentary constituency in the novel* FIRST AMONG EQUALS, *but like much of Jeffrey Archer's fiction bears little resemblance to reality. The building is actually located on CALTON HILL.*

Yours faithfully,
GORDON DAVIE,

Via e-mail.

Lookalike

Cook

Père Tanguy

Sir,

I wonder if any readers could explain the curious resemblance between Van Gogh's Père Tanguy and our illustrious legover foreign secretary, Robin Cook?

Cheers,
C. CAREY,
Address unknown.

"Rupert [Murdoch] is a genius and even today, I believe, an underestimated genius... You say of somebody, 'He's a genius' if he can see over the hill. Rupert sees over the hill and the next hill, right over the range. Rupert can see over the Himalayas."

CHARLIE "GORBALS" WILSON
UK Press Gazette

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Brown nosing

Sir,

*Tony Blair and Gordon Brown may harbour resentments — as revealed in Paul Routledge's brilliant and controversial biography of Gordon Brown — but Paul's relationship with his publisher couldn't be sweeter (*EYE *23 Jan).*

For the record, Paul Routledge is not, and has never contemplated, suing Simon & Schuster. The TIMES, *which had the perspicacity to scoop exclusive serial rights to the book well before media interest in its contents became frenzied, not only honoured their serial payment to Paul, but extended their serial from two parts to three.*

Furthermore the book is in its third reprint before publication and is currently a Top Ten bestseller.

At a party to celebrate the book's publication held at Politico's Bookshop in Westminster on 2 February, Paul Routledge was fulsome in his praise of Simon & Schuster and his editor's monstrous hangover the next day was proof of far too much over-indulgence in mutual self-congratulation.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,
MARTIN FLETCHER,

Editorial Director, Simon & Schuster, London W2.

Hard sell

Sir,

Re: Kent. The comments you make on homes for the elderly are untrue. Our new administration is looking to privatise the homes. The previous Liberal/Labour administration last February brought a report to committee to totally close ten homes; the Liberal councillors voted to close six. The Chesterton report, which you refer to as being kept secret and not officially seen the light of day, was in fact sent to members of all parties, including Liberal and Labour, immediately the report was printed on 16 October. The decision as to whether to privatise the homes will not be made until February — hardly a cover up.

Yours faithfully,
SANDY BRUCE-LOCKHART,

Leader of Kent County Council (Conservative).

(The council has now cleared plans to sell 31 old people's homes. Ed.)

Long shot

Sir,

You report that Charlotte Edwards advised her readers not to dress tartily to attract an intelligent man but did so for her interview with Charles Moore at the TELEGRAPH *and got the job.*

So where's the inconsistency?

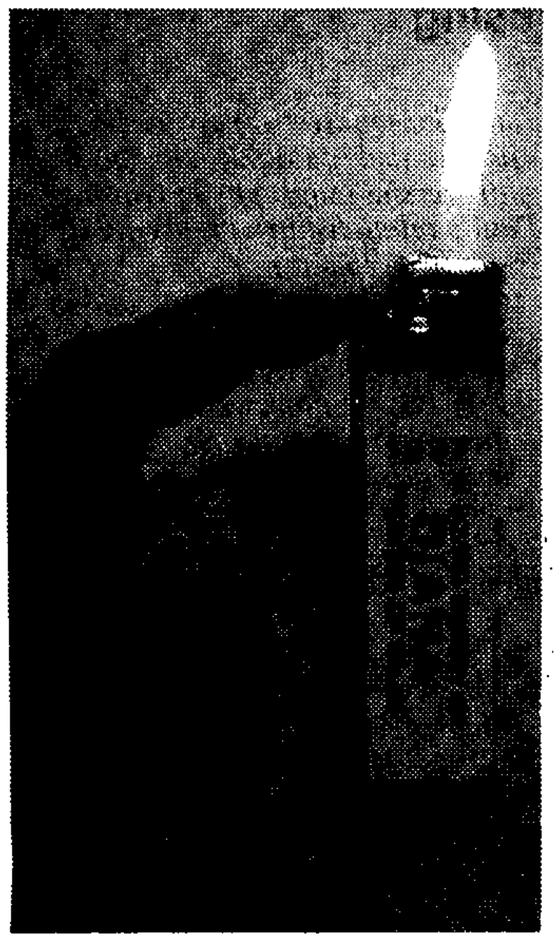
Regards,
LAWRENCE LONG,

Crawley, W. Sussex.

● *We have subsequently learnt that Ms Edwards was NOT interviewed by Charles Moore but by a lesser* TELEGRAPH *person and are delighted to set the record straight. Ed.*

HUSBAND
We want to buy a house, what sort of prices are they?
ESTATE AGEN
Well ours start at around £40,000
We want to buy a tent, what sort of prices are they?
ARMY and navy STOR

I-SPY



Gifu, Japan

Submitted by Stephen Field. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

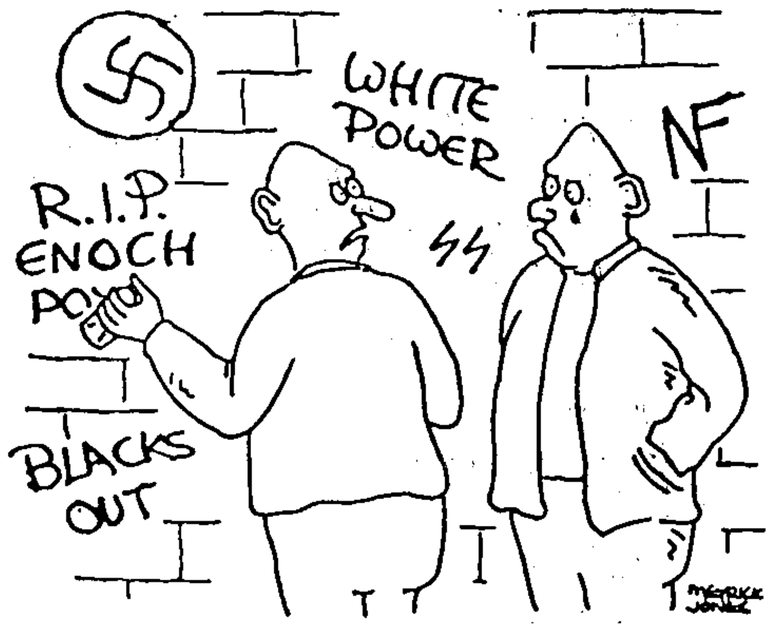
Victim supporter

Sir,

Re: Hackney Racism. Amazingly, Rotten Boroughs (EYE *943) claims that "thousands" of jobs at Hackney council were given to Hausas from Nigeria, and that this was a "main reason" for the anti-black racism belatedly exposed by the council's own recent report. In fact, the total number of Africans employed by Hackney in the 1990s was well under 1,000, including people from many countries, and even more communities, not just Nigerian Hausas. And one of the real "main reasons" why the council has got into such a mess was (and still is) that, like so many racists, they didn't get their facts right about the people they victimised (and still don't). Where does that leave you?*

TONY WHELAN,

Colin Roach Centre, Hackney.



"He was a man of real integrity — the most brilliant politician of his generation"

White and wrong

Sir,

Square Eyes' criticism of HEAT OF THE SUN *is clearly one made with little sense of humour but to say that Carlton's adaptation of Collins' "Woman In White" was "one of the best classic dramas for many years" conflicts greatly with the facts.*

Anyone who has read the book will know that the TV version hardly did justice to it, as reflected by the preponderance of critical letters published in the RADIO TIMES *after the broadcast.*

Sincerely,
MICHAEL POINTON,

London SW19.

Grumble in the jungle

Sir,

*In response to letter from Farish A. Noor (*EYE *943) I say "Bollocks".*

While we're on the subject of man's inhumanity to man, maybe he would like to apologise for the atrocities committed by Malayan bandits during the Malayan Bandit War. A dreadful, psychological war in which my father was a platoon leader. He came across British soldiers and local, pro-British villagers nailed through palms and forehead, if they were lucky, or just through wrists and feet for the less fortunate, to trees in the jungle. That was Malaysian brutality.

I do find it absolutely disgraceful that Noor can consider the British behaviour to be on the same level as the Japanese. I strongly recommend that he talks to the Malaysians of Sandakan; like many other Malaysians they had their town bombarded, their children from age seven years taken into prostitution and men enslaved or tortured by Japanese. The British may have had selfish motives in Malaya but that is nothing in comparison with the vicious and inhuman motives of the Japanese.

Yours faithfully,
K. McGUIRE,

Address withheld.

Anagram

Sir,

If you "resent dome plan", why not blame "Peter Mandelson"?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HARRIES,

Twickenham, Middlesex.

The province we're in

Sir,

Although your Funny Old World report on the Canadian jury foreman with the exculpatory cough (EYE *942) is basically accurate you have, as usual with your tercentennial attentions to Canada, committed a right royal screwup.*

You purport to quote directly from THE SAINT JOHN TELEGRAPH JOURNAL*: "...an extremely dangerous man is now at large in the state of Ontario."*

No Canadian newspaper would ever publish those words. In the United States, political subdivisions are called "states"; in Canada, they are called "provinces". You have been caught in the act: you made it up. Concerned that your English readers would not know what an "Ontario" is, you added to a newspaper account words that were never there.

The praise in your account ("Ted Minden is a wonderful judge...") is misplaced. When I served on a jury in the state... er... province of Ontario, the hopelessly biased judge, who plainly sought a conviction, insisted that each juror repeat our verdict ("Not Guilty") rather than merely saying "Yes", the confusing response which satisfied Minden.

Your statement (published three months after the event) that "an extremely dangerous man is now at large" is hopelessly misleading. The accused was speedily returned to court where, after a brief legal tussle on the issue of double jeopardy, the correct verdict was registered and he was packed off to gaol... er... jail... er... put behind bars.

Yours coughingly,
RON HAGGART,

Toronto, Ontario.

Hobswash

Sir,

It is rather insulting for St Albion's parish poet — EYE *942 — to suggest that the distinguished historian professor Eric Hobsbawm CH — aka Erich Obstbaum — is a Stalinist.*

Rather has he combated Stalinists and as a loyal citizen has rightfully earned his Companion of Honour.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN WALTER,

Morecambe, Lancs.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"I have no history of violence — I can knock down every point she has made."
GEOFFREY BOYCOTT, BBC News
(Philip Bannister)

"And Blackburn have made an immediate start to this game."
JOHN MOTSON, BBC1
(Harry Doherty)

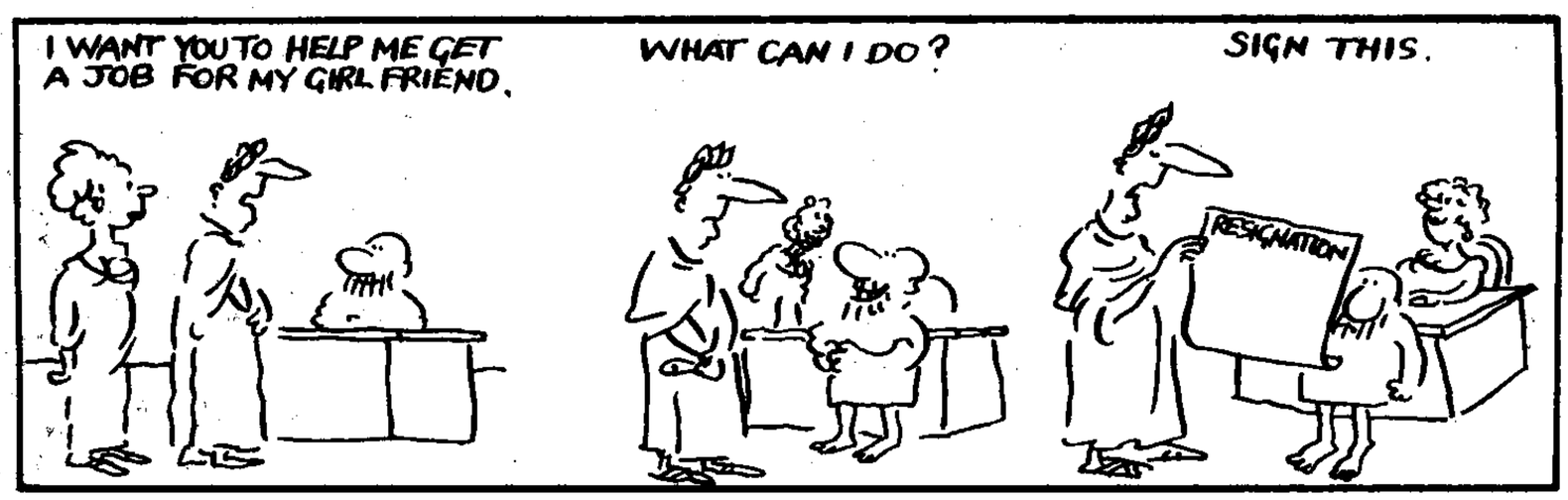
"He [President Clinton] should lay it on the table and let the American people decide."
PETE KAYE (US Congressman), Radio 4
(T.J. Mott)

"Let's talk about Hillary Roddam Clinton, who'll be going on American breakfast TV in a few hours' time. Of course, she's pulled it off for her husband in the past..."
Presenter, BBC News-24
(Rob Paul)

"...the State of the Union Address... empowered him further, to show him as a man on the job."
DR JOHN WATSON (Prof of Political Science), Sky News
(Anon)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



FUNNY OLD WORLD

● "When my wife and I returned to our table after using the bathroom, we couldn't understand why all the other diners were pointing at us and laughing," Jeffery Bada told viewers of a Philadelphia cable tv station. "It was only when we asked the waiter that we found out everyone had been watching us in the cubicles, and that I'd just dropped my pants in front of the entire restaurant."

David Ciurlino, owner of the Paradigm restaurant, defended the unusual entertainment on offer to diners. "It seems crazy but people enjoy it. In fact, I've got dozens of regular clients who specifically ask for table 12, which is the one nearest the toilets. The door of each cubicle is made out of a liquid crystal display, and it's opaque when the lavatory is vacant. But when someone goes inside and slides the bolt, that switches the power on and reverses the polarity. People in the dining area can see everything that's happening in there, but inside the cubicle the glass is still opaque, so first-time users don't know that anything's wrong.

"We've seen men and women doing just about everything in there, besides the obvious. Popping pimples, picking their noses, whacking off, you name it. Sometimes people get angry and storm out and never come back, but mostly they're just happy to be in on the joke. And if you don't want people seeing you on the john, then don't slide the bolt. It's that simple." *(The China Post, 17/1/98. Spotter: Tony Endfield)*

—●—

● "After walking the streets all night, I found myself in the Guildhall Square," Terry Evans told reporters gathered in the Mr T Cafe in Salisbury. "I felt very, very happy, and I had the delusion that I was a very rich man, and that God was telling me to help the poor of the world. So next morning I went to the Nationwide Building Society and drew out £2,000, which was all my life savings. Then I came to the cafe and gave £50 notes to all the customers, except for a few who knew me and refused to take it.

"Then I gave more money away to people on the street, and booked a flight to New York. It was only later that the reality hit me, and I remembered that I am in fact not at all wealthy. I made a mistake, and I just hope that people will be sympathetic enough to return the money I gave away. Mind you, I have always said that if I ever won the lottery I would give a million pounds away to poor people, and I still would. But I haven't." *(Salisbury Journal, 15/1/98. Spotter: Will McCarthy)*

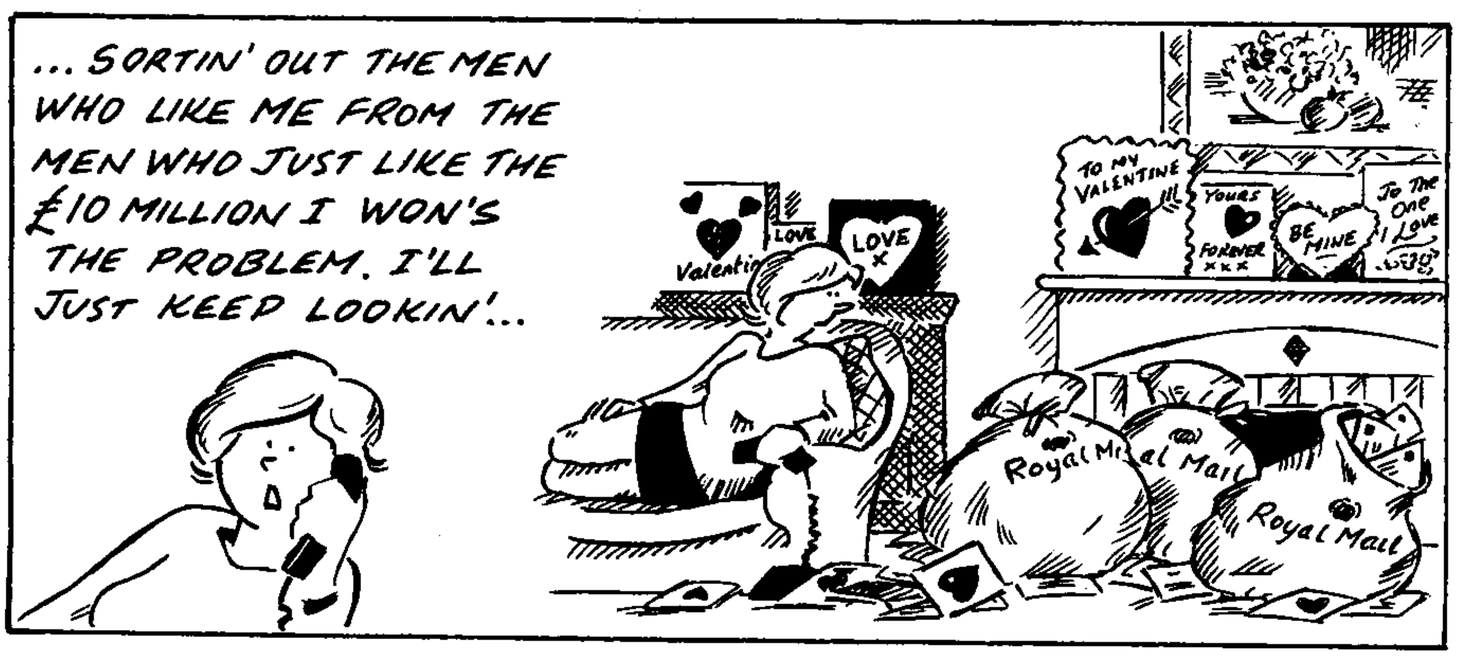
● *"Many people are feeling sorry for the accused, but I'm not" Detective Kate Wilson told jurors in an Ashburton courtroom, on New Zealand's South Island. "My view is that he's just a thief who happens to be fat."*

However William Dickie, who had earlier been found guilty on charges of theft and fraud, escaped jail on a technicality. Explaining why he was sentencing Dickie to four years of house arrest, Judge Chris Somerville said: "there's only one reason that I am not sending you to jail, and that is your size. We know that your weight is in excess of 800 pounds, because you broke the scales in the police cell when you were held there on remand, and you also broke the chairs and the lavatory. There is no prison clothing big enough for you, and no bed strong enough, and the showers are too narrow for you to be able to use them. You will place an intolerable strain on the prison authorities if I send you there. Therefore, much against my will, I am sentencing you to house arrest." (Ashburton Herald, 8/1/98. Spotter: Brendan Joseph O'Byrne)

COMPILED BY **VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH**

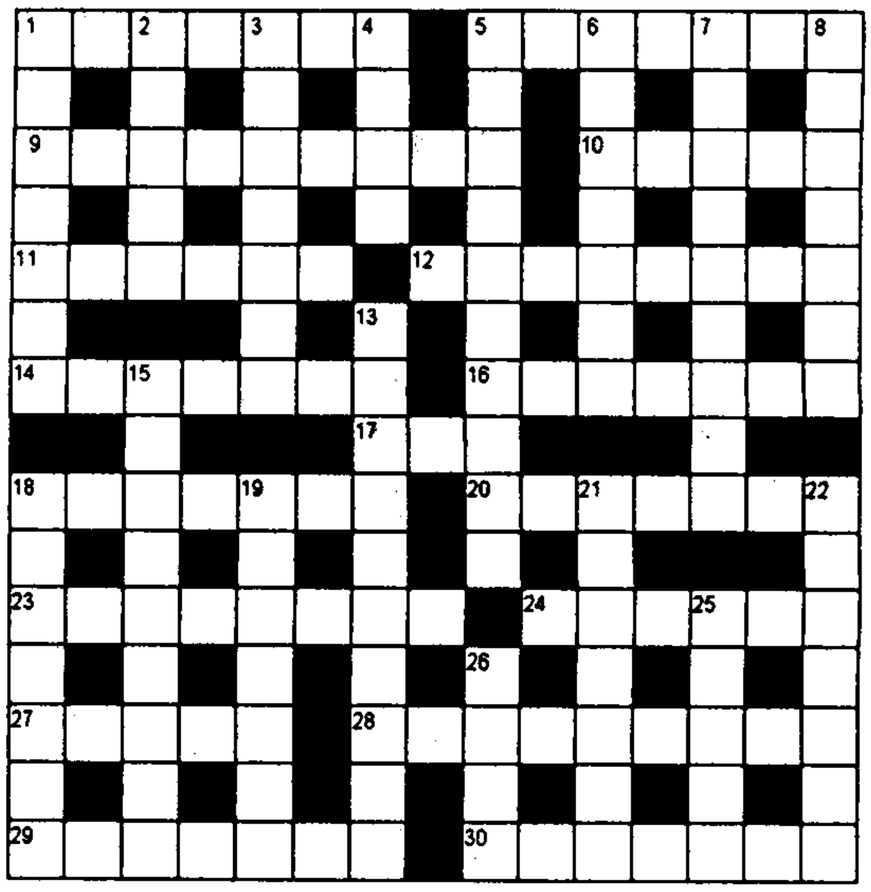
The Lottery Winners

TURNER


...SORTIN' OUT THE MEN WHO LIKE ME FROM THE MEN WHO JUST LIKE THE £10 MILLION I WON'S THE PROBLEM. I'LL JUST KEEP LOOKIN'...
LOVE
LOVE
TO MY VALENTINE
YOURS FOREVER XXX
BE MINE
To The One I Love
Royal Mail
Royal Mail
Royal Mail

EYE CROSSWORD 99

by Cyclops *£100 prize*



ACROSS

1/5dn Pull definitive Blair babe and colleague – and so have to do something distasteful (4,3,5,5)
5 Public embarrassment of head of cabinet in beachwear (7)
9 One way to get shot of a distant celebrity? (9)
10 Rope in Camilla's solicitor (5)
11 It's worth a single at least giving head to everybody! (2-4)
12 Kelvin nabbed by intent viewers and exposed (8)
14 Boycott has bearing on battered arm and gob (7)
16 (see 25)
17 Tebbit unmanly and not ... (3)
18 ... bothering a small company piss artist (7)
20 State of someone underneath Clinton getting out from down under (7)
23 Last men? Bollocks! (8)
24 Dick, put right in is crooked ... (6)
27 ... so is held by Stephen centrally (5)
28 Court getting on to once-trendy photographer (3,6)
29 Gandhi's cover protected by two old ladies (7)
30 Pissed, holier-than-thou journalist holding a gnomish organ (3-4)

DOWN

1 Lessening of tension when comedian includes camp item (7)
2 Publicity over Clinton's endless erection leading to improvised intercourse (2,3)
3 Piss-artist: one who advises retaining Labour's leader! (7)
4 A symbol of sex in Piccadilly? (4)
5 (see 1ac.)
6 Regally unsound, producing an adverse corporate reaction (7)
7 It's hell getting MP to do a hatchet job (9)
8 Butcher's all right getting in foreign sole to a point (4-3)
13 Clap Roger (oh no!) wildly on getting top grade (10)
15 No support for cabinet arses? (4-5)
18 Kiss over-the-top luvvie in London (7)
19 Not being in debt a much-abused thing? (7)
21 America has green environment? Boloney! (7)
22 Andy on getting excited about Fergie's butt, was a pest (7)
25/16 Media person, a bit of a mimic on buzzer, catching Tony unexpectedly (5,7)
26 Hardly a major presence in the Commons, Short, Dewar, Livingstone and Prescott, primarily (4)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 27.02.98. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 98

Winner: ROY BLAND

ACROSS: 1/19 Political asylum 6 Serbs 9 Revenue 10 (see 21) 11 Celeb 12 Chief Whip 13 Eubank 15 Agitator 18 Gross pay 19 (see 1ac.) 22 Tony Blair 24 Inset 26 Apology 27 All eyes 28 Dregs 29 Endoscope.

DOWN: 1 Porsche 2 Level 3 Tony Banks 4 Coerce 5 Lashings 6 Sheaf 7 Ritz Hotel 8 Sweeper 14 Brown-nose 16 Testicles 17 Paralyse 18 Get laid 20 Matisse 21/10 Orb and Sceptre 23 Boobs 25 Say-so.

JUSTICE COCKLECARROT TO STEP DOWN

by Our Legal Staff
Joshua Rozenbeard

BRITAIN's most controversial judge, Mr Justice Cocklecarrot, 183, is to step down after being kicked very hard by the Lord Chancellor.

Justice Cocklecarrot has a long history of controversial judgments, but the final straw came last week when he failed to deliver a verdict on the copyright case of The Daily Sketch vs. Marconi Radios (Aberdeen).

Having first heard the evidence in 1924, the Judge admitted that it had proved a difficult case particularly as he had been asleep throughout the entire hearing — and indeed for much of the subsequent 70 years.

Grievous Bodily Harman

The judge also made headlines when he assaulted a cameraman under the impression that it was his wife Lady Cocklecarrot. "It was an easy mistake to make," he said at the time.

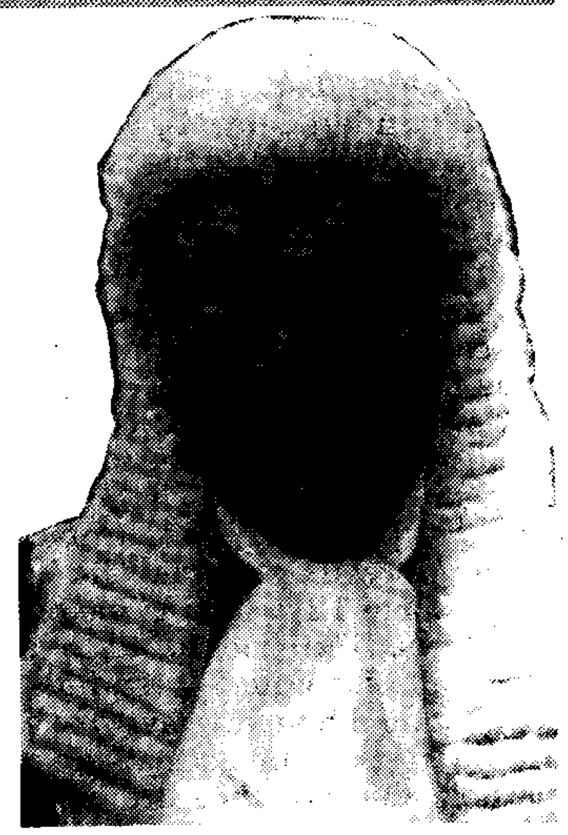
THE SAYINGS OF JUSTICE COCKLECARROT

Who is Stanley Matthews? (1951)
Who is the Queen? (1953)
Where am I? (1953-1998)

Advertisement

The House of Wolsey

Introducing our new quality range of soft furnishings. Including:



● **Cardinal pattern wallpaper with repeating wig and red nose** *(surely 'hat'? Ed.)* **motif.** *£7,000 per metre.*

● The Lairg-over cabinet size double bed 7ft 6in by 6ft 3in (Dewar Duvet optional). *£72,735*

● **The "Wee Dram" minibar — cased in walnut and ebony and embossed with the Chancellor's coat of arms. Comes complete with typical evening's supply of 68 cases of Young Blairie's 12-year-old single malt.** *£175,000*

For full details write for our brochure and we will arrest you for attempting to invade the privacy of a very important person.

SOCCER

SENSATION AS 'RUDE' KNEE AXED

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man At The Opening Of Madame Butterfly

THERE was dismay in the soccer world last night and some commentators were moved to say that it had been rocked to its foundations by the news.

Yes, unbelievably, "Rude" Knee who has singlehandedly masterminded Neasden FC's record-breaking spell at the bottom of the North London league has been shown the door.

The normally ashen-faced Knee was visibly shaken as he denied that he had asked the club for £2 million a week.

"Money has nothing to do with it," he said through his legendary tight lips.

Sticks in Gullett

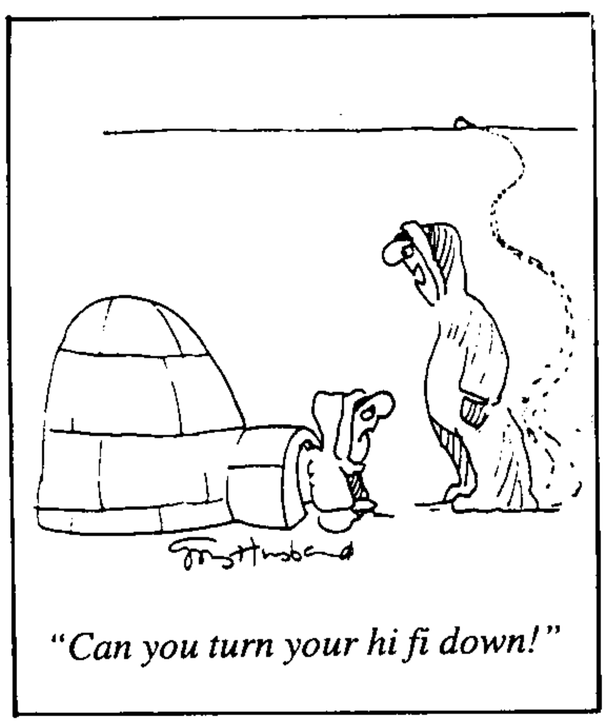
"This is simply a clash of personalities between myself and the chairman. I am the sort of personality who wants a huge amount of money and the Brigadier is the sort who doesn't want to give it to me."

"Rude" Knee is 59.

LATE SCORE

Neasden	0
England	0

VALENTINE SPECIAL



"Can you turn your hi fi down!"

THE SUNDAY TIMES

TACKY

ENOCH was right. He knew this country would go to the dogs once they started allowing in foreign immigrants who would come over here with their loose morals, their all-night parties, and their drugs. I should be sent back to where I belong. It's the only language I understand.

10p on SUNDAY – cheaper than any other parish magazine!

ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

Incumbent: Rev. A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)

Hi there!

I'm not going to pretend that I haven't been disappointed this week.

You all know what I'm talking about. The disgraceful scenes at the Parish Youth Club disco, which Cherie very kindly agreed to attend on my behalf (and also of course her own, as she is a fully independent woman in her own right!).

Mr Prescott also went along, to represent the working men's club, and it was jolly good of him too, to give up so much of his leisure time to support the young people of the parish.

Look! I mean, my goodness, we're all in favour of young people, with their exciting music and their trendy clothes which are setting the fashion all over the world!

As it says in the Bible book, "Blessed are the young in heart" *(Book of Ecstasy Ch. 8)*.

It was all the more distressing therefore to be told by Cherie when she got back of the appalling incident involving Mr Prescott and Mrs Nobacon's son Danbert.

It seems that Mr Prescott was innocently having his picture taken for the local paper when Danbert came up behind him and emptied a bucket of cold water over his head.

For goodness sake! What's got into these people?

This thoughtless and disrespectful action, completely uncalled for in my view, wholly ruined the evening for John, for Cherie and for all the other people

who had come to enjoy the music and some of the really vibrant home-grown talent of which St Albion's can be truly proud — groups like The Tossers, Shaggerwhammy, the Sex Slaggs — St Albion's answer to The Spice Girls — and Overdose. *(Alistair, can you check these names — I'm pretty sure Cherie remembered them correctly.)*

It was particularly hurtful — and let me make it clear, I'm not angry, I'm just hurt — that this wholly untypical incident should have taken place on an occasion when the church and young people were in such obvious harmony!

The suggestion made later by Danbert to his mum that he was fed up with "all these old bores trying to be cool" was particularly upsetting and insulting!

I am prepared to forgive you, Danbert, and so is Mr Prescott, on receipt of a written apology to be delivered to the vicarage.

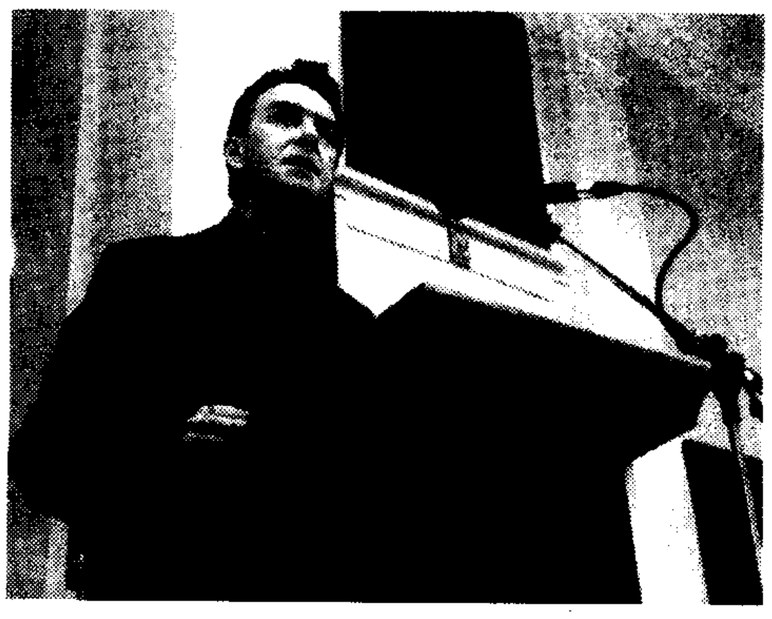
Let's be adult about this, and not behave like a bunch of kids at their first disco!

Yours,

Tony

Notices

● There will be a special emergency meeting of the Parish Peace Studies group on Thursday, when the Vicar and Mr Cook will talk on ***"Why We Must Bomb Saddam"***.



A delightful picture of the warden preaching at Evensong in Tony's absence. His text "O Ye of Little Faith" (Acts 12.7) concerned the Millennium Tent which he stressed was very much on course even if some of the big sponsors had pulled out.

Cherie Party

The Vicar's wife has very kindly agreed to welcome parishioners to the vicarage to show a video of the holiday she and Tony recently spent in the USA with the Rev. William Clintstone III, President of the First Church of Seven Day Fornicators.

Please can we have a good turn out?

PM

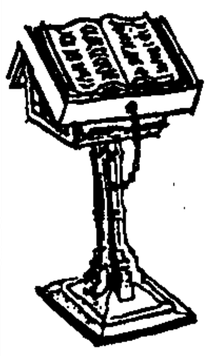
YOU WRITE.....

Dear Vicar,

With all due respect, I feel I must question your credentials as leader of St Albion's. I am old enough to remember your predecessor, Mr Attlee, who was vicar here 50 years ago. Without doubt, he was head and shoulders above the present

Yours faithfully,
A. Benn,
The Stansgate Home For Distressed Former Gentlefolk

(The Editor, Mr Campbell, reserves the right to cut contributions for reasons of space.)



THERE'S been a lot of talk recently about the need to modernise the Lord's Prayer. Quite right, say I! There's nothing worse than old-fashioned traditional language which the vibrant young people of today can't relate to. That is why I've had a go myself, and this is the version which we'll be using at Evensong this Sunday:

Our Carer who is in another dimension. You are a very special person. We hope all your future plans work out, and that whatever you want comes true on all levels of experience.

Please supply all our material needs. And let's not be judgemental with each other, so that others won't be judgemental with us, if you see what I mean.

Look. Please don't put us in situations which we can't handle. And keep us in a risk-free environment.

For you deserve respect, not just now but on a long-term basis. Be lucky! And take care!

Amen.

And while we're about it, can anyone think of a better title than the out-of-date "Lord's" Prayer? Any suggestions? TB

To Remember In Your Prayers

The late Mr Powell who for so long played such a large part in the life of the parish. He wasn't perhaps the easiest person to get along with, but very brilliant men are often not appreciated by those around them. Wasn't it Our Lord who said a "prophet is without honour in his own country"? Although he only held parish office for a brief period as Chairman of the Footpath Committee in 1957, his contribution will never be forgotten. Whatever it was!

TB

Newspaper of the Year

The Daily Torygraph

Britain's biggest-selling quality daily Friday February 20, 1998 45p

Man With Moustache and Funny Hat is Dead

A Nation Mourns Tributes Pour In

by Our Political Staff Simon Hefferlump and the late T.E. Utterlyridiculous

A MAN with a moustache and a funny voice has died aged 97.

He was widely agreed to be the finest mind of his generation and the greatest influence on British politics this century.

His decision to invade India in 1959 changed the world forever.

He later became a taxi-driver in his native Wolverhampton and enjoyed a brief period of notoriety in the late 1960s for his outspoken views on coloured immigration.

Alf Garnett was 106.

The Wisdom of Enoch

AMONG the many prophetic and extraordinary utterances of the late Oswald Powellsly were the following unforgettable contributions to Conservative political philosophy:

As Junior Health Minister 1958:

"Let's get in some coloured nurses, they're cheap."

On Britain's transport problem 1961:

"Let's get in some black bus drivers, they're cheap."

On Britain's unemployment problem 1967:

"It's time we sent these darkies home. They're costing too much."

As the Tory Party's intellectual guru, 1974:

"Vote Labour."

On the authorship of Shakespeare's plays, 1978:

"No rational person could believe that they were written by anyone other than a committee of great scholars, under the chairmanship of Queen Elizabeth the First."

On Jesus Christ, 1982:

"It is inconceivable to any sentient being that the historical figure we know as Jesus Christ was crucified. I have studied the original Greek texts, and it is clear to me that Our Lord was swallowed by a whale."

On himself, 1995:

"As I look into the future, I am filled with foreboding. I seem to see a river of garbage. I see myself foaming at the mouth, and two coloured men in white coats saying 'Come along, Mr Powell, it's time for your injection'."

Those tributes in full

Lord Grocer of Heath

"I am not going to say anything about this dreadful man. No, I'm not. So don't ask me. If you ask me, he was an appalling man. Almost as bad as Mrs Thatcher. I hope she's next."

Mr Tony Blair

"Enoch was my childhood hero, who later became a man I am proud to call both colleague and friend. He could properly be called the founder of the modern Labour Party."

The Baroness Thatch, formerly Supreme Ruler of the Universe

"Enoch was one of my greatest admirers. All his ideas about Europe and the free market came from me. He was proud to call me a friend."

The Lord Healey

"I had the greatest possible respect for myself. As an intellectual force in British politics, Enoch was second only to me."

Charles Moore

"Away from his public persona as a steely intellectual and world statesman, Enoch was in fact a warm-hearted and genial father-figure. When I was a boy at Eton, I wrote to him asking for his autograph. He responded immediately, enclosing an invoice for 100 gns. I have it framed above my desk to this day."

Inside

Was He The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived? asks Paul Johnson **8**

Was Enoch The Original For 'Mosley' In The Hit TV Series? asks Christina Odone **9**

How Enoch Influenced The Spice Girls by Sarah Sands **11-17**

Gay love secret of man with moustache

A SENIOR Church of England figure, Canon Eric Gropetrouser, has revealed that, while at Cambridge in the 1920s, the man with a moustache wrote a series of passionate love poems of a homo-erotic nature, using the pseudonym Enoch J. Thribb.

I saw you walking down the street
You looked so bright and gay.
But when I called round at your digs
They said you'd gone away.

(Translated from a 2nd Century fragment by the Roman tragedian Tatchellius)

© *A.E. Housman*

Letters to the Editor

What Enoch said

SIR — Your obituary of the late Enoch Powell contained a number of serious errors. As one who was actually present in person at the now famous Wolverhampton Town Hall meeting of 13 July 1968, I can vouch that the exact words used by Mr Powell on that occasion were very different indeed from the version quoted in your obituary.

Mr Powell in fact spoke throughout in his native Latin, and the key phrase which was to be so misunderstood by the media was a quotation from the great Roman author Cabbius Taxius (Chariot No. LXIVDMC), writing in the 1st Century AD on the influx of Thracians into the city of Antioch. He said: "Timeo Danaos, et asti spumante, Tiberos fluvios rem acuit tetigisti, et ego in Arcadia vixi", which being translated means: "My fellow citizens, I tell you, all these darkies coming over here taking our jobs, they should be strung up. I had that Mark Antony in the back of the cab once." At the time, everyone in his audience understood exactly what Enoch meant, ie that he welcomed coloured immigration and the positive contribution that it could make to British life. It was only later that the great man's detractors, mostly Communists and coloured agitators, tried to make out that he was some kind of rabble-rousing racist.

A. POLOGIST
The Old Bunker
Solihull

Yes! It's Britain's Newest Fanzine

Everything you need to know about Britain's most popular Band

BLAIRZONE

TOUR NOOZ

It's official! Washington ♥ Tone! And Tone ♥ Bill Clinton! Tone has conquered America like no British band has ever done before. His spectacular over-the-top love songs have captured the hearts of the entire U.S. of A. And when he gigged in Washington with legendary sax-maniac "Wild" Bill Clinton, the American nation got Tonemania. There's been no harmony like it since the late great The Beatles played Shea Stadium, or Mrs Thatcher had bilateral talks with Ronald Reagan. It's the triumph of Britpol! As the fans were chanting in the streets: "Cool Britannia, Brit-ony waives the rules for Clinton!"

"Wild" Bill and his legendary crooked instrument

BRIT AWARDS LATEST

BLAIRZONE'S very own Johnny Prescott, the band's heaviest rocker, was the undoubted star of the Awards. John picked up Best-Single-Breasted-Suit-Covered-In-Water. And didn't he look cool, just chillin' out?

Johnny's Top Track: ***No Anarchy in the UK, You Bastards***

Bill and Tone's ❤ Love Duets

You Are The Sunshine From My Bottom — Stevie Wonder

❤ *Don't Let That Woman Go Down On Me — Sir Elton John* ❤

All We Are Saying Is Give War A Chance ❤ — the late great J. Lenin

Introducing the Eye's New Star Columnist

SALLY JOCKSTRAP

The Voice of Sport

I WATCHED the British cricket team on the television last night. Honestly! who selected this shower and left out Ian Wright and Alan Shearer? He needs his head examined. Britain were lucky to get away with a 0-0 draw.

I'VE BEEN a Sheffield Tuesday fan all my life — but even I have to admit they are never going to win the way they are playing at the moment. When I went down to watch them at Twickenham, Steve Davis was distinctly off form with breaks of 12, 22 and 31.

WHAT'S gone wrong with Tim Henman? No wonder the boss of Arsenal Hotspur is keeping him on the bench *(cont. p. 94)*

MR PUNCH BANNED 'Too shocking for kids'

by Our Media Staff **Punchtime O'Booze**

A WEST Country library has banned one of Brit ain's best-loved comic figures, Mr Punch, on the grounds that he is "unpleasant", "sexist" and "deeply offensive".

In a typical scene Mr Punch is groping a young assistant in his shop, while she is trying to sell sausages.

A policeman enters holding a baby, saying "Is this yours?"

Punch and Dodi

Mr Fayed *(surely 'Punch'? Ed.)* goes berserk, grabs the policeman's truncheon and hits everyone in sight, shouting "That's the fuggin' way to do it".

However, Mr Punch had his defenders. Little Michael Cole, said, "I love him. I come in every day to watch him.

"And I think what Mr Punch is trying to say is that he loves all women and children, and wants only to be liked and given a British passport."

Michael Cole is 6.

Those Winter Olympics Results In Full

Men's Snowballing
Gold: Spliff Rizla *(Canada)*
Silver: Mario Juana *(Mexico)*
Bronze: Hashish Baksheesh *(Pakistan)*

Mr Rizla was later disqualified when traces of snow were discovered up his nose.

Women's 2000m Downhill Ice Sumo
Gold: Poppy Grower (Australia)
Silver: Ko-Ko Kain (South Korea)
Bronze: Ellesse Dee (France)

The remainder of the day's programme was abandoned due to the wrong kind of snow on the mountain. The BBC will therefore be continuing with full coverage of the day's snow presented by Desmond Main-Lynam.

Lord Lairgover's Press Guide

❶ No article shall be permitted to appear which may be deemed in any way to invade the privacy of Her Majesty's Government.

❷ No article shall be permitted to appear concerning the sexual mores of any serving minister of the Crown since these are not in the public interest.

❸ No article shall be permitted to appear referring to the relationship between Mr Robin Cock and Mrs Goneril Regan, since their private lives are not a matter of public interest.

❹ Should any journalist ever again dare to refer to the fact that I ran off with Donald Dewar's wife in 1976, that same person shall be taken from this place, whereinsoever that may be, and hanged by the neck until he or she is dead.

❺ Have you got that, you bastards?

Given this day under the Great Seal of Lord Lairgover of Glenmorangie
Cardinal Woosey
Hampton Court

'REPLACE TESTS WITH CONTINUAL ASSESSMENT'

New demand by English Head

by Our Education Staff **R.R. Arr**

A FORMAL demand for an end to "unfair tests" has been lodged by the England cricket captain, Mr Michael Atherton B.A. Cantbat *(shurely 'Cantab'? Ed)*.

"These tests are completely unrepresentative of English players' cricket ability. We should be assessed throughout the year on our performance in the nets and not judged on a very stressful one-off five-day trial."

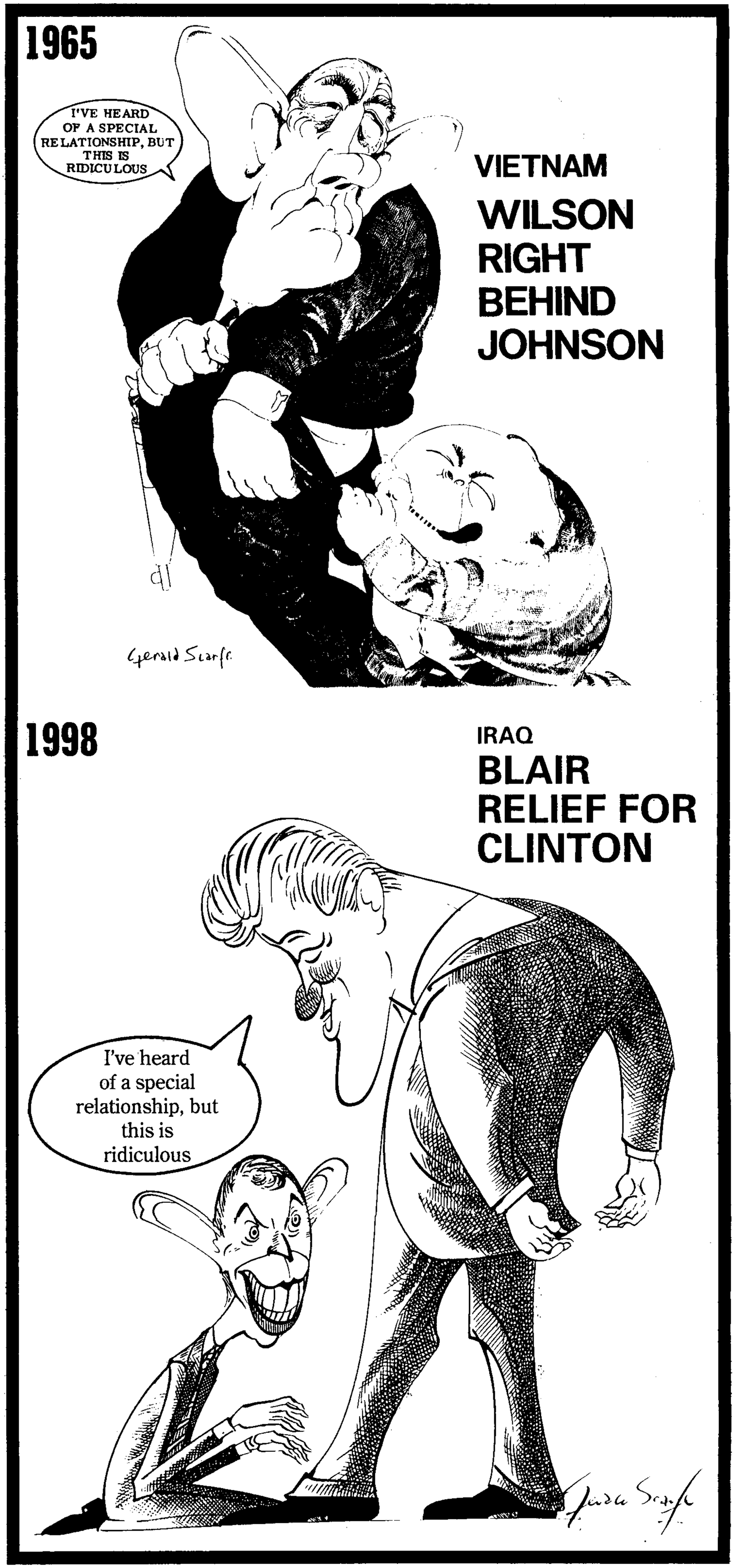
He continued: "Players of enormous ability are failing through no fault of their own. A test is an artificial situation where an individual is suddenly expected to bat or bowl well on the spur of the moment."

He concluded: "If we had had continual assessment monitoring our performance in practice matches we would have won the Ashes and would be three-nil up in the current series against the West Indies."

LATE SCORE

England (Batting Module 1)	3,492 for 0 wickets
Stewart	2,342 units completed
Atherton	1,150 units completed

Result: England Pass



Would the Diana Story have lived longer if American journalists had been on hand to rescue it?

ALL THIS week *The Times* is serialising the Most Astonishing Story Ever Told by American's top investigative reporting team Irving Koch and Hiram Bull, taken from their bestselling book *The Story Fayed Told Us To Tell* (Harrods Press, £399.99). Part 94:

ONE OF the most legendary sights in England's London is the world famous Harrods House, towering over the tiny Buckingham Palace next door.

Here fashionable shoppers flock in from all over the world to visit the renowned Soft Furnishings Floor, where hand-made leather sofas are currently on sale at only £7,195.

Here smiling customers are welcomed with a complimentary copy of the world's most celebrated humour magazine *Punch*.

But our mission was more serious. We were here to interview His Highness the Prince Fayed of Egypt, who founded the Harrods Store in the teeth of opposition from the British Establishment.

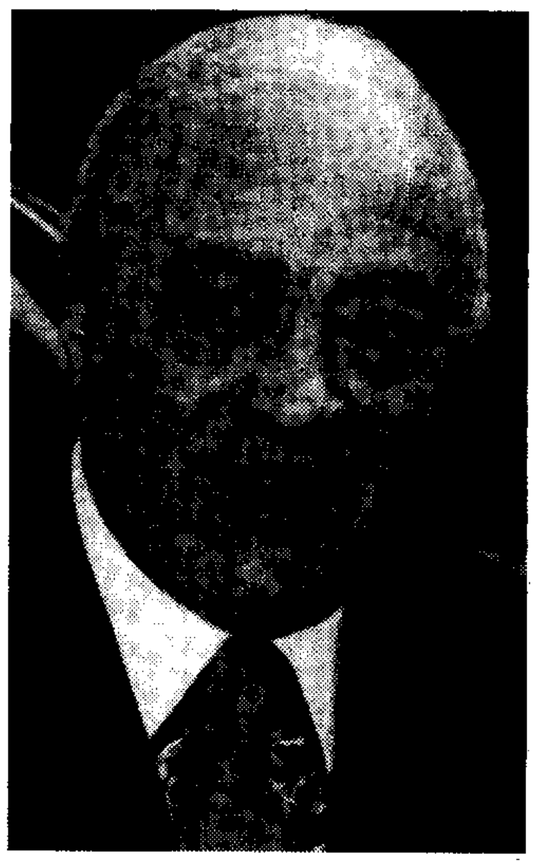
Inviting us in to his palatial marble-floored office, encrusted with precious stones borrowed from his customers' safe deposit boxes, he laid out before us the amazing true story of the last hours on earth of the World's Most Beautiful Woman, Diana the Princess of Wales.

"I'm going to tell you like it fuggin' was, guys," confided the World's Richest Man in his colourful Port Said argot.

And he did.

What emerged was one of the most moving and inspiring stories ever told. It was totally different in every detail from the sanitised version put out by the Palace.

Here are just some of the things the Prince told us:



■ Diana loved Mohamed like a father, and called him by a special pet name, Fuggi-Fuggi.

Only with him and his son Dodi could she relax and truly be herself. "I hate everyone in the world but you, my darling Fuggi-Fuggi," she once said.

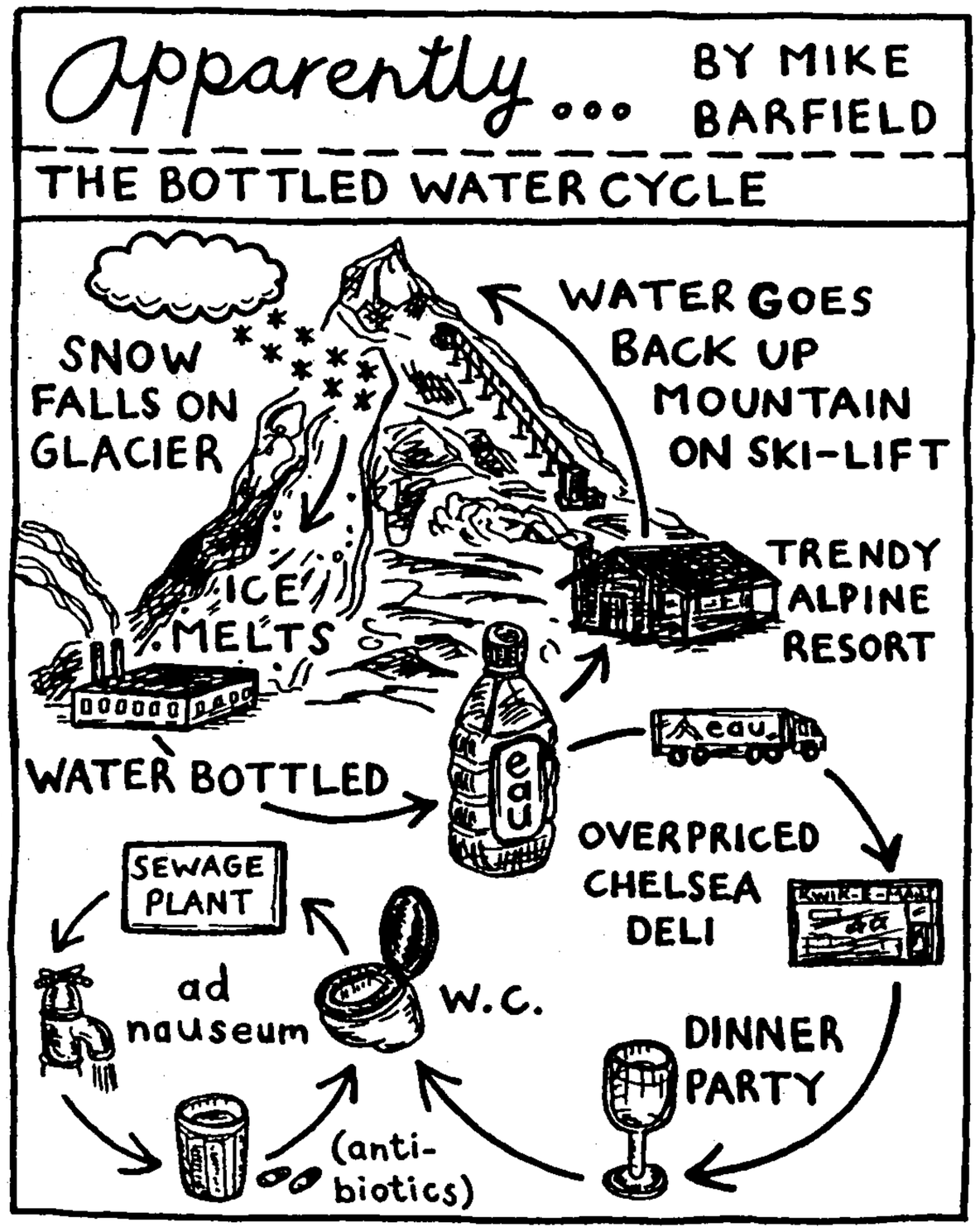
■ "They keep me a prisoner in Buckingham Palace," she once told Mr Fayed. "But when I am with you I feel like a bird released from its gilded cage and free at last to sing my true song."

■ On the night of her death, Diana rang Mohamed to say, "Fuggi, the most wonderful thing has happened. Dodi and I are getting married, and I'm pregnant. If it's a boy, we're going to call it Mohamed, after you darling Fuggi. And we want to get married in the Harrods Food Hall. I'm going to convert to Islam and Imran Khan will conduct the ceremony."

■ As he recalled the events of that tragic night which forever will be etched indelibly on the memory of humanity, the old man's eyes filled with tears. "You won't believe this," he said, "but when I heard about the dreadful accident, I at once flew to Paris and within minutes I was by her side to hear her last dying words. 'Fuggi,' she said, 'when I am gone, I want them to make you King of England.' "

TOMORROW

The unexplained mystery — why is The Times printing this stuff? Is it just an accident or is there a more sinister explanation?



The Mirror FIRST and BEST
www.mirror.co.uk

● WAS DIANA THE VICTIM OF A TOP SECRET CONSPIRACY BETWEEN BUCKINGHAM PALACE, MI5, MOSSAD, THE FRENCH SECURITY POLICE AND CAMILLA PARKER-BOWLES, THE NOTORIOUS HEAD OF SMERSH?

No. But that's what Mr Fayed says and we're happy to print any old rubbish.

THE LOST PRINCE — SHOCK PICTURES REVEAL THE ROYAL TRAGEDY THEY TRIED TO FORGET

by Dross Benson

THE sad face of a lonely young middle-aged man stares out across the years.

He looks for all the world quite normal.

But in reality he is a forlorn victim of the most heartless Royal family the world has ever known.

For years the Royals have tried to suppress any record of the tragic figure they are calling "the lost Prince".

But I can reveal exclusively that Queen Elizabeth II had a son called Charles who, in the 1990s, was sent into exile in a remote Himalayan kingdom in order to get him out of public view.

The forgotten Prince was the elder brother of Princess Anne, Prince Andrew and Prince Edward.

But early in life he showed signs of serious mental instability, by talking to plants, imitating the Goon Show and marrying Princess Diana.

His parents despaired and sent him to Tibet *(cont'd p. 94)*.

TOMORROW – only in the Daily Mail – more secrets of the hidden Royals. Dross Benson reveals how the Queen contracted a secret marriage to an obscure Greek naval officer in a ceremony witnessed by only 14 million people.

"It does seem a bit over the top, him having to stand out here while he's wearing nicotine patches"

St Cakes

Internet Term begins today. There are 3000 computers in the school. A.J.P. Webcrawler (Browsers) is Keeper of the Mouse. E.E.E. Mail (Messages) is Senior Menu Bar. Mr R.P.D. Double-Click (Head of Information Technology) has replaced all other members of staff. Screensavers will be held on All Anoraks' Day, 4th March. On 31st March there will be a downloading from http://www.hotdaneporn.com of *Dutch Dental Assistants Go Bonking Mad*, directed by Simon Cyber-Filth (O.C.). There will be a service of de-consecration of the school chapel on Easter Saturday before it is refurbished as a sixth form Internet Cafe. Shutdowns will be on 7th April.

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam Enoch Powell, Conservative politician, and Fred Francis, the inventor of Scalextric

So. Farewell
Then.

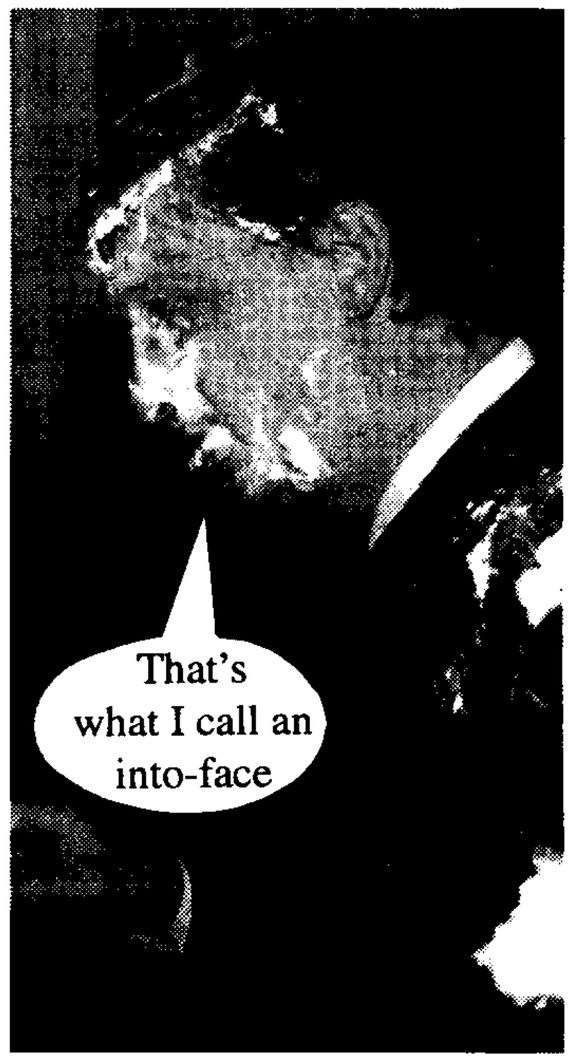
Enoch Powell and
Fred Francis.

One of you was a
Brilliant man

Who contributed
Hugely to British
Life.

(E.J. Thribb 7½)

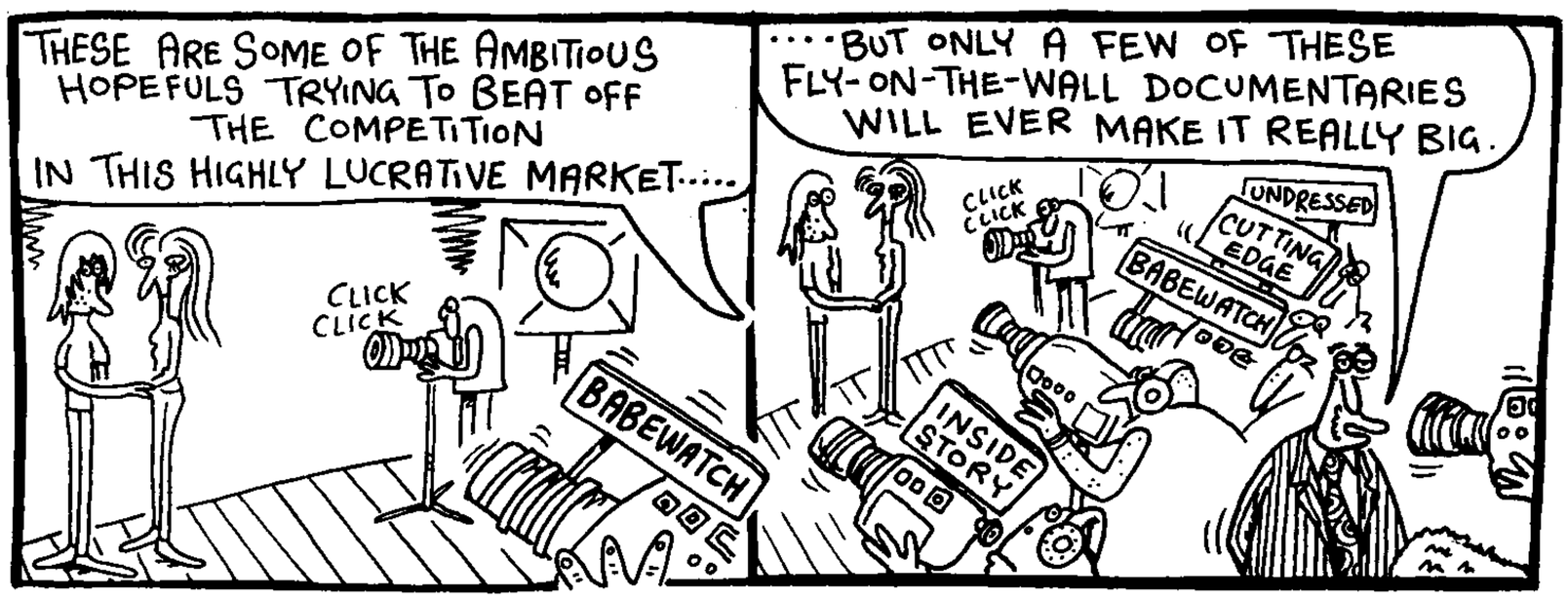
GATES SHOCK



Lady Di
Kalender 1998
Die schönsten Bilder von Diana – Prinzessin des Volkes
DM 19.80
KRAPP KG
Am Stadthallenparkplatz
Telefon 40 14
Babenhäuser Zeitung

SUPERMODELS

KERBER


THESE ARE SOME OF THE AMBITIOUS HOPEFULS TRYING TO BEAT OFF THE COMPETITION IN THIS HIGHLY LUCRATIVE MARKET.....
CLICK CLICK
BABEWATCH
....BUT ONLY A FEW OF THESE FLY-ON-THE-WALL DOCUMENTARIES WILL EVER MAKE IT REALLY BIG.
CLICK CLICK
UNDRESSED
CUTTING EDGE
BABEWATCH
INSIDE STORY

DIARY

Dear Agony,

Like you, I am a committed member of the Church of England. I only wish more members were committed. My problem is this. I am deeply desirous of a media career, sounding off in public on all the relevant issues of the day. Alas, my only qualification is that I am married to a vicar. A.R., Winchester. PS. Oh, and I also happen to be shameless.

Smashing! What other qualifications do you need? Have you thought of applying to Radio 4's "Thought for the Day"? They're always absolutely DESPERATE for anyone who'll sound off. And here's a terrific tip: always start your pieces with the words, "It's a known fact that...". Here's one or two of my own truly smashing kick-offs to choose from:

1) It's a known fact that Our Lord was not a smoker. Nowhere in the Bible does Jesus have a cigarette. Nor did he drink-drive, or leave damp towels on the bathroom floor.

2) It's a known fact that even those homosexuals who don't catch AIDS die on average at 42 years of age from other diseases, like extreme smelliness.

3) It's a known fact that British women are 55% more likely to have a multiple orgasm than their American counterparts. So who said we Brit-babes can't sock it to 'em? Certainly my husband's yet to complain, bless him!!!

Dear Agony,

What do I do? I recently discovered my husband on our 8th floor windowsill in his dirty shoes, preparing to jump, saying his life wasn't worth living anymore. Please advise. J.P., Canterbury.

Men!!! Personal cleanliness can be a terrible problem with our menfolk, bless 'em. Do they honestly think their houses are tidied by the good fairy or something???! Whenever I've found my own husband wearing his dirty shoes around the windowsill, I've quoted to him 1 Corinthians, 8:6, "Sweepeth up thine own mansion, for naught but thou shalt sweep it for thee."

Dear Agony,

I am a happily married mother of two. Recently, however, my husband has been complaining of terminal depression. He says

AGONY ATKINS

he resents the way I lock him in a cupboard on a Friday evening and don't let him out until Monday morning, even though he himself acknowledges that I always make sure he's out in time to get to work. How can I make him snap out of it? His self-pity is driving me barmy. Name withheld, 4b, Old Farm Cottages, Ashberry, Wilts, phone no. 081873 424592.

It is a known medical fact that men often complain for no reason whatsoever. For their own good, they must be taught to snap out of it. Whenever my own husband, bless him, moans that he is suffering from stress-related illness, nervous disorder, deep depression, or some other form of the mopes, I cook him a fried breakfast, force him into his trainers and tell him to jolly well go and get a good blast of nice fresh air. On his return, he knows I will be ready on the bed in my trusty old suspenders and leather basque, my scarlet lipstick and false eyelashes generously applied. This trick often keeps him away for weeks at a time — leaving me free to get on with this problem page!

Dear Agony,

My daughter, aged 14, has just disappeared. What can I do? P.W., Reigate.

Which newspapers have you tried? Some of them could pay £1000 for 500 words.

Dear Agony,

My husband and I have been greatly saddened by the recent behaviour of our teenage son. He is moving away from Our Lord in terms of talking in a lower-class accent, watching "Neighbours" and saying "toilet" when he should be saying "lavatory". There are even photographs of the Spice Girls on his bedroom walls,and whilst rummaging through his drawers my husband chanced upon something hidden beneath a pile of shirts which turned out to be the new CD by Oasis. We know that he will have to pay for this behaviour in the life to come. We have been devout readers of the Daily Telegraph all our lives. Where did we go wrong? We are in despair. C.J., Battersea, London.

It's a known fact that more teenagers are consumed in the fires of damnation (1 Colossians, 2:6) than any other age-group, so it is important to make sure that your errant son does not perish before his 20th birthday. Our Maker gave us clear instructions as to how to live, and your son has disobeyed them all. There is no mention of The Spice Girls OR Oasis in the entire New Testament, and Our Saviour never once asked if he could go to the "toilet". Is your son also afflicted with acne? If so, I would suggest you put it to him that this is Our Maker's response to his thoughts and deeds.

Dear Agony,

Which is more sinful — a homosexual or a feminist? E.T., Glasgow.

Our Maker would not have given man the bowler hat if He did not wish him to be manly. It is a known fact that more militant feminists die in car accidents than normal women. Also, everything we know about the Lord's ways tells us that homosexuals are unsuited for the clergy: if they were meant to be vicars, the Lord would not have granted women with traditional principles such as myself so much air-time.

Dear Agony,

Every week, I make a complete and utter fool of myself in public. Is there a known cure? Name withheld.

Try sucking boiled sweets.

Celeb

LIGGER

DADDY, I'M GOING TO SAY SOMETHING NOW THAT I KNOW YOU WON'T LIKE MUCH...
WHAT IS IT PIXIE FROU FROU?
IT'S SOMETHING I'VE BEEN WANTING TO SAY FOR A LONG TIME BUT HAVE NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY.
IT'S TO DO WITH YOU NEVER HELPING AROUND THE HOME. DON'T BE TOO OFFENDED WILL YOU?
COME ON. SPIT IT OUT.
MUM! MUM! DAD'S WASHED UP!
NO I'M NOT. DON'T BE SO RUDE...

Literary Review

"But why should Elvis WANT to kill the Princess of Wales?"

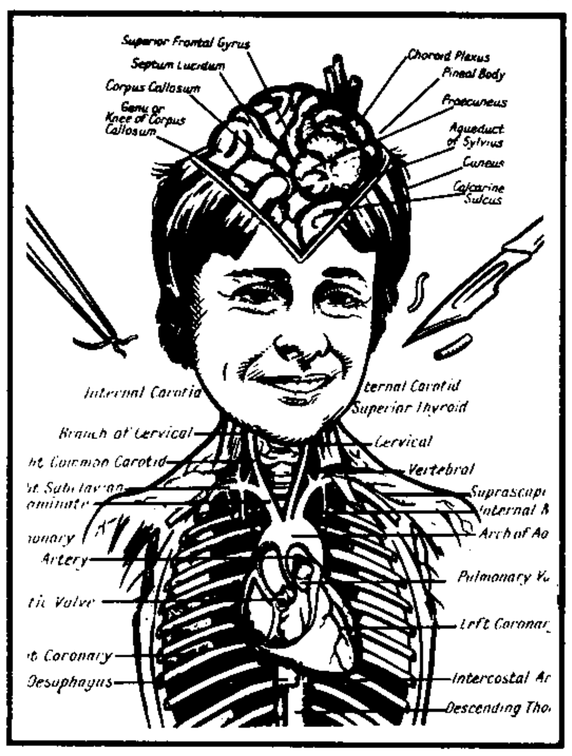
Bored stiffs

Déjà Dead
Kathy Reichs
(Heinemann, £10)

GOOD title, isn't it? As well as being the punchline to the original dead baby joke, it's a neat bit of franglais. Kathy Reichs, you see, is writing about Montreal, which is in francophone Canada. So: déjà dead, *mort* already.

Unfortunately, that little *jeu d'esprit* is about the liveliest part of the book. Not just about stiffs, *Déjà Dead* is pretty lifeless itself. A touch of the pathetic fallacy perhaps?

Never mind. *Déjà Dead* has been a huge hit anyway and is firmly ensconced at the top of the hardback bestseller lists. It has been promoted, you see, with a dumpbin and wrapper that proclaim simply: As good as Patricia Cornwell or your money back. That's publishing these days. You won't believe it's not butter! The funny thing is that Patricia Cornwell herself is currently selling less.



The appeal is straightforward enough. Reich's heroine may be boring, but she *is* a female forensic pathologist. And female forensic pathologists are where it's at. Once upon a time, any old detective inspector or private dick would do. No longer. If she ain't got a circular saw and a licence to carve, you can forget it. Bugger Miss Marple. (And then mutilate the remains.) We want bodies, lots of 'em; and we want them cut up in front of us, please, real slow, by a nice lady. An' put in a serial killer too, the mean type.

The publishers, sensitive as ever, have been listening carefully to the demands of popular taste and Kathy Reichs is the result. Put it another way: all over the world, editorial directors have been contemplating the fantastic sales achieved by Cornwell and muttering to themselves: I'm gonna get me one of them.

And here she is. Kathy Reichs is "one of only 50 forensic anthropologists certified by the American Board of Forensic Anthropology"; she works in North Carolina and Quebec; she's a frequent witness in criminal trials; and *Déjà Dead* is her first novel. If she hadn't existed, it wouldn't have been necessary to invent her though. Probably every autopsy artiste in the world has a thriller at the back of the chill cabinet by now.

They must all be mightily encouraged by Ms Reichs. For she has proven what Cornwell only suggested: that you don't need to be able to write very well or to plot effectively to have a big success, so long as you keep the bodies coming and make them smelly enough.

Dr Temperance Brennan is the *anthropolgiste judiciare* in Montreal. It's hard work because folks keep finding dismembered women buried in plastic sacks. Temperance checks them out, a process lovingly described, in case you want to try it at home: "What did you do, Temperance?" "I cut the few strips of dried muscle uniting the pelvis to the low end of the spine in back, freed it, carried it to the sink, and submerged the pubic portion in water." Etc.

Intuitive Temperance thinks that with all these bodies turning up, butchered in the same way, there's quite possibly a serial killer at work. But those thick old boys in the police department just don't see it. So we get lots more murders before they cotton on and the serial killer starts hunting after Temperance herself, not to mention knocking off her friends. Can you guess what happens in the end? Yep. In a final confrontation, Temperance just has to use a knife on a warm subject.

The plot is as full of holes as a maggoty corpse. At an early stage, Temperance and the cops corner the killer but he simply runs away and they don't catch him or, somehow, even catch sight of him properly. Then when Temperance just happens to be poking around an old churchyard where he's buried another victim, at dead of night, he knocks her out but no more. Who knows why? Another time he leaves a severed head in her yard. But does she give up? No. She's so feisty, she just keeps saying: "Bones. That's *my* jurisdiction, unless I'm mistaken."

Indeed. The only respect in which *Déjà Dead* advances on Cornwell is in giving even more detail about bones and saws than has ever been furnished before in popular fiction. There are lots of lectures on the sawmarks the killer leaves, for example: "I'll bet the farm this isn't a power saw. Sounds like some kinda speciality handsaw... Kinda like a big hacksaw, teeth set pretty wide, so as not to blind... Usually there's a lot of drift, but the blade chisels through bone and cuts real clean..." And so on. Kerfs matter. (Look 'em up.)

So here it is. Contemporary fiction: the cutting edge. We're holding up bones to each other for amusement — a bit like the opening sequence of *2001*.

Funnily enough, the cult of the lady sawbones goes straight back to Thomas Harris and *The Silence of the Lambs*, like so much else. Clarice Starling attends a memorable autopsy early on in the book. She's not actually a pathologist — but people can take a hint. In no time, Cornwell was on the path to riches. Only a few years after that the BBC delivered us Amanda Burton reaching into a rib cage, lifting off the top of a skull, in *Silent Witness*. Couldn't you just fancy it? And now here's Temperance heading for the big screen with her prize collection of butcher's scraps. Kerfs up.

Maybe it's a reaction to the latest beef ban. It's difficult, though, to guess what comes next. Vivisection, could it be? Necrophagy? Almost worth staying alive to find out.

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

■ "GULF war hero Andy McNab last night backed an SAS assassination of Saddam Hussein to avert a new bloodbath" — so said the *Sun* on 5 February in a "Gulf on the Brink" special edition.

The millionaire novelist alleged that "the SAS is fully equipped and more than capable of assassinating Saddam" — a mere four paras (*sic*) before receiving a mention for one of his several books.

Operational support swiftly followed the plug in the form of an endorsement from McNab's former corporal, Chris Ryan: "If the decision is to take out Saddam then the SAS are the guys. They could do it no problem."

No problem? Er... Both McNab and Ryan have been to Iraq before — during the last Gulf War — but neither reminded *Sun* readers on this occasion of their war stories, preferring to look ahead to future adventures. And no wonder. In 1991 both men were part of an eight-man mission inserted behind Iraqi lines to destroy SCUD missile launchers. But thanks to the issue of the wrong kit, equipment cock-ups and faulty intelligence, only one of them evaded capture. And after the war US intelligence officers confirmed that SAS operations had made no discernible impact on Saddam's ability to deploy SCUD launchers in the western desert. Indeed, the only victors were those troopers who wrote bestsellers about the cock-ups, retiring to sunnier climes on the proceeds.

☐ *FRIENDS of Mark Hollingsworth, who is ghost-writing Mohamed Fayed's memoirs for a handsome six-figure fee, fear that the book may never see the light of day.*

The selling point for Hollingsworth's literary masterpiece, which has yet to find a publisher, was that Fayed would be talking for the first time about Di, Dodi and so forth. But that was before the Phoney Pharaoh blabbed and babbled to the Mirror *— and to two hacks from* Time *magazine who have rushed out a book based on his allegations.*

'Bookworm'

FANCY THAT

The idea came to me when I was watching with my little boy, who was then about two, Disney's 'Snow White'. I thought: "Yes, that's what should happen to Lily when she runs away: she goes to the house of the seven dwarves. Only they're not dwarves. And they're hung like horses.

"Think about it: if the seven dwarves had been great big men, of course she would have fucked them all.

KATE SAUNDERS
on her novel *Lily Josephine*
BOOKSELLER

SNIPCOCK & TWEED
IT NEED NEVER HAVE HAPPENED — AND I KNOW WHO'S RESPONSIBLE
DEATH OF A PRINCESS
WEIDENFELD AND NICOLSON
DEATH OF A PRINCESS
THERE'S CLEARLY A CONSPIRACY OUT TO GET THE ESTABLISHMENT!

footnotes

North Wales Child Abuse Tribunal

THE SMEARING OF ALISON TAYLOR

A CONSISTENT theme emerging from the Waterhouse inquiry into child abuse in North Wales is that much of the abuse could have been stopped several years before any official action was taken.

In 1986 Alison Taylor, who was running a home in Bangor, confronted Gwynedd county council and the police with a string of complaints about abuse from former inmates of a neighbouring home. A police inquiry discounted her evidence and the abuse continued unabated. Why?

Clear answers started to emerge for the first time from the evidence, which started on 9 February, of the North Wales police. For most of 12 February the tribunal heard evidence from former detective chief superintendent Gwynne Owen, who, as head of North Wales CID, led the 1986 child abuse inquiry. Alison Taylor had told him of alleged abuse, some of it horrific, against at least six children in care. In one case a boy had been severely beaten and forced to swallow a paper clip. He was then ordered to inspect his shit every day and to produce the paper clip.

ALISON TAYLOR

In his report on his inquiries, Mr Owen did not hold back his personal opinions about corporal punishment which had long since been abolished in North Wales homes. The boy, he argued, had been "chastised" — and rightly so. He then opined that Alison Taylor's allegations were suspect because she had acted from "ulterior motives".

He wrote: "Mrs Alison Taylor's role in the whole episode is questionable. She is an intelligent, articulate and strong-minded woman who appears to exert a strong influence over colleagues. Her attitude towards the management of the social services in Gwynedd can properly be described as subversive." Mr Owen explained to the tribunal that this was an "opinion" which he had "gained from the people I had seen at interview". He went on to say that if Mrs Taylor's whistleblowing had taken place in the police or armed forces "I would have described it as seditious".

Mr Owen's view of Alison Taylor as a subversive and seditious troublemaker naturally influenced his attitude to the children he interviewed. Many of the allegations of these children, he reported, "were not spontaneous complaints made by child residents, but rather the result of deliberate trawls and subtle interrogation facilitated by some sort of reward, eg cigarettes".

One girl, a former inmate of a North Wales Home who had made allegations, he reported, was "manipulated by a more intelligent and articulate woman (Mrs Taylor) for whatever motive may have been in her mind". He described a boy who made allegations to Alison Taylor as a "dull, wicked boy being manipulated and given succour by a clever woman who used him for her own purposes".

Where was the evidence for all these smears? Mr Owen told tribunal chairman Sir Ronald Waterhouse that his allegation that Mrs Taylor had bribed the children to make complaints arose from "a feeling". He was asked by counsel to the inquiry, Gerard Elias QC:

Q: There wasn't any other evidence was there that she was using cigarettes to encourage children to make false allegations, no evidence of that was there?

A: I can't recollect at the present time that there was.

Q: A feeling that you had?

A: A suspicion.

Mr Elias asked him:

Q: You see, it's the truth of the matter isn't it, Mr Owen, that your approach from the beginning — forgive me the use of the word but I think it is appropriate — was to rubbish Alison Taylor's allegations?

A: Not at all.

Q. And secondly your approach, perhaps conditioned by what you believed Alison Taylor was doing, was to rubbish the complaints of the children or former child residents?

A: Not at all.

Perhaps not surprisingly, no one was prosecuted as a result of Mr Owen's investigation. Alison Taylor was sacked by Gwynedd county council in 1987. When she sued for unfair dismissal, her employers settled the action with an apology and generous compensation. She never understood why she was so shabbily treated until now, when the previously secret reports of Mr Owen and his colleagues have been publicised at the tribunal. During the 176 days of the inquiry, a huge pile of evidence has emerged to prove Alison Taylor's allegations thoroughly justified.

Not long after Mrs Taylor's discrediting and sacking, disturbing evidence started to emerge of police involvement in child abuse in other parts of North Wales. Perhaps the most sensational revelation yet made at the tribunal came from detective superintendent Peter Ackerley, who presided over a much longer and deeper child abuse investigation in 1991 and 1992. Ackerley revealed that he had investigated four former or serving North Wales police officers accused of abusing children in homes. One of them was the former officer whose two days of evidence were discussed in the last *Eye*.

Mr Ackerley revealed that he had recommended that this officer should be prosecuted for the abuse. In his view, he said, there was enough evidence to convict, but the crown prosecution service (CPS) had decided not to prosecute. He had also recommended prosecution of a special constable, but that course too had been rejected by the CPS. In the cases of two other officers, he said, he had recommended no action. One of the officers left the North Wales force without a stain on his character. In September last year he was convicted of raping a 12-year-old girl. In November, the court of appeal quashed his conviction on the grounds that the evidence of a witness — a 14-year-old friend of the victim — was not properly sworn. He is in prison pending a retrial.

Long arm of the Lawson

■ WHO is the distinguished barrister appointed as counsel to the inquiry into the racist killing of the young black student Stephen Lawrence? He is Edmund Lawson QC.

As counsel to the inquiry, Mr Lawson will determine the pattern of the investigation and the line to be taken by the authorities. His extract about himself in Chambers's reference book, *The Legal Profession*, reveals: "Practice also covers general crime, particularly the defence of police officers and judicial review, with a specialisation in abuse of process applications. Interesting cases include Blue Arrow (defended UBS, Philips and Drew); Maxwell (defence of Ian Maxwell); the Pan-El case, acting for Coopers and Lybrand in Singapore. Also defended police officers in the prosecutions following the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six cases."

EDMUND LAWSON QC

PS: The chief argument for the defence of the police officers in the Guildford case was that the Guildford Four were guilty. The problem with this defence was that an IRA gang admitted bombing the relevant pubs in Guildford and Woolwich, gave substantial supporting evidence for their admissions and insisted that none of the four convicted people were involved. The police officers, who were charged with fabricating evidence against the four, were acquitted.

PPS: The Lawrence inquiry will be presided over by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, 71, a retired high court judge. Some of Sir William's record in judicial review immigration cases can be found in *Eye* 936 (31 October 1997).

The Hunt is on

JONATHAN AITKEN

IT IS now seven months since the collapse of the libel case against the *Guardian* brought by former Tory chief secretary to the treasury Jonathan Aitken, whose meticulous story on oath about his family's movements in Paris in 1993 was shown to be completely false.

On 19 January Gordon Prentice, Labour MP for Pendle, asked the home secretary about police inquiries into the "alleged perjury of Jonathan Aitken". Home office minister Alun Michael replied that on 12 January "two officers from the Metropolitan police travelled to Paris to interview staff at the Ritz". The perjury investigation, he said, "is being pursued as expeditiously as possible".

The man in charge of the expeditious pursuit is detective chief inspector Geoff Hunt of Scotland Yard's crack organised crime-fighting outfit, SO1. Mr Hunt has plenty of experience investigating famous people connected to the arms trade. On 27 March 1995, in a letter to the Scott inquiry, he disclosed that he had investigated a reference to the police about Mark Thatcher and had written to the attorney-general about it. "After examination," he wrote, "the matter had been found not to warrant further investigation."

Could the Aitken investigation end the same way?

Gorman Blimey!

■ ECSTATIC and prominent was the media coverage on 6 November 1996 of a legal triumph for British Airways. In the central London county court, the case of former Scotland Yard detective John Gorman, who was suing BA over some cut glass which he said he'd swallowed on a BA flight in 1993, was chucked out.

Mr Gorman, who is retired and lives in Tenerife, was not in court. Six days before the case was heard, he informed the court that he was ill in hospital and asked for an adjournment. The adjournment was refused by His Honour Judge Nicholas Medawar, who made it clear he thought Gorman was lying and faking. The British Airways publicity machine had a field day, and the media fearlessly mocked John Gorman. He was alleged to have faked claims on the health insurance company PPP — an allegation from which PPP at once publicly dissociated itself.

Three months later Gorman travelled at his expense to London to appeal to the judge to hear his case. When Medawar refused, Gorman applied unsuccessfully to Lord Justice Swinton-Thomas for permission to appeal. Finally, two other senior judges gave leave to appeal.

The line-up at the court of appeal on 3 February was as follows: on one side Gorman's solicitor, David Price, and his note-taker; on the other, for British Airways, Robert Webb QC, junior barrister Robert Lawson, and a bevy of solicitors from the very expensive City firm of Beaumonts. After about three hours' legal argument, the court of appeal (Lord Chief Justice Bingham, Lord Justice Judge and Mr Justice Robert Walker) upheld the appeal. They concluded that the judge had been wrong to assume that John Gorman was lying or faking without hearing his evidence.

Medawar's judgment was set aside and John Gorman is free to continue his case. Though (or perhaps because) the court was full of distinguished transport correspondents, the judgment was greeted in total media silence.

HORTON DOWN

■ PITY poor Howard Poulson. He has just "resigned" (ie been sacked) as chief executive of the ailing Leeds-based electronics components distributor, Premier Farnell.

His pay-off by modern City standards is pathetic — £470,000. But his real humiliation is to be blamed for the disastrous 1996 merger of thriving Farnells Electronics with the much larger Premier Industrial Corporation of Cleveland, Ohio.

The sad fact is that the merger was not Mr Poulson's idea at all. It was the brainchild of a new non-executive director who waxed lyrical about the Mandel family who owned Premier. He boasted that he had got to know the Mandels really well when working in Ohio in 1987.

In November 1995, this new man took off for New York and a meeting with Morton Mandel, 74. The Mandels proposed a merger which shovelled $1.8bn into their already expansive pockets. The new director came home triumphant and quickly convinced Poulson and the other Farnell directors that the merger was a sure fire winner which would take them all into the big time.

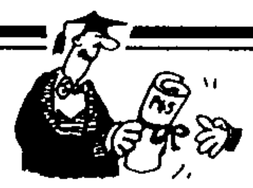
Alas, not so. The share price plunged and the wretched Mr Poulson was chucked. But the man chiefly responsible for the fiasco is still there. He is our old friend Bob Horton, former (failed) chairman of BP and now (failing) chairman of Railtrack.

SIR BOB HORTON

OF RICHMOND BILL

QUESTION: There were 94 complaints against police at Richmond last year. Can you guess how many were upheld? 0, 10, 20, 40,80, 94?

ANSWER: 0.



High Principals

ALL'S WELL AT OAKWELL

EADE

■ TEN weeks ago *Eye* 938 proudly quoted the words of Prof David Melville, chief executive of the Further Education Funding Council, which funds and regulates FE in Britain. He had recommended this column as required reading for heads of colleges seeking guidance on good governance.

So here's a question. "Is it appropriate for a college to spend taxpayers' money on a box at their local football stadium for entertaining contacts?" Yes, says David Eade, principal of Barnsley College, which rents a box at Oakwell, the ground of Barnsley FC.

When the matter was raised in 1994, Mr Eade circulated a long and passionate justification. "The lease of the box", he explained, among other things, "allows the college to demonstrate in a concrete way its thanks to the many people from local industry, commerce, politics and education who have supported this College... I think that one afternoon's visit to the local football club in return for hard work done on behalf of the college with no expectation of reward is no more than a gesture of thanks."

Among the many local dignitaries who have enjoyed their football from the college box are Eric Illsley, Labour MP for Barnsley Central, and Jeff Ennis, former leader of Barnsley council, now MP for Barnsley East and Mexborough. Barnsley is now in the premier league, so the cost of the box has gone up to £10,000 a year. If there are any lingering doubts about the ethics of this lease, Mr Eade could raise them at the FEFC, of which he is a member.

MILLER FLIGHT

MILLER

■ SOMETHING of a record was achieved in January at the ancient university of Stirling when the principal/vice-chancellor Prof Andrew Miller and the university secretary Kevin Clarke spent much of the month on the other side of the world.

Prof Miller was in Singapore from the 18th to 23rd for a meeting with the University of Stirling Alumni Group, a meeting with the British Council to discuss ways of increasing student numbers, a dinner with a "university benefactor who had sponsored a professorship to discuss the new department of entrepreneurship in which the sponsor had expressed an interest", and visits to Singapore Polytechnic and Ngee Ann University.

On he went to Kuala Lumpur on 24 January for a meeting with the Malaysian minister of education to discuss, among other things, a "distance learning company called Scottish Knowledge", two meetings at the Institut Teknologi MARA, and more meetings with ex-Stirling students and with the Stirling Alumni Group.

Mr Clarke was in New Zealand for three weeks (3-23 Jan) for the International Meeting of University Administrators. He managed to squeeze in a trip to Australia where he visited the government's higher education department and the universities of Sydney and Canberra. Mr Miller's trip to the Far East followed another similar expedition last year when he went to Singapore and Australia. He also attended two European rectors' meetings in Turku, Finland, and Palermo, Sicily.

Asked how much all this had cost the taxpayer, the university had no reply.

KINGMAN'S RANSOM

KINGMAN

■ ANNOUNCING grimly that Bristol University is £1.5m in the red, its vice-chancellor Sir John Kingman has called for urgent measures to deal with the deficit.

The desperate nature of the crisis is reflected in item six of last year's financial report, which shows the salary of the vice-chancellor (Sir John Kingman) rising from £92,000 to £106,000 — an increase of 15 percent, or five times the rate of inflation.

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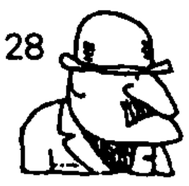

In the City

THE home office's post-Maxwell consultation paper on fraud trial juries, which suggests the appointment of assessors or special panels of jurors or judges, will provoke the traditional knee jerk reaction from those who have grown fat defending guilty suits on legal aid at the taxpayers' expense.

The same old excuses will be wheeled out. Everybody has a right to trial by jury, especially if they may go to prison. Judges and counsel can and must make fraud trials simpler. There is no evidence that juries do not understand complex financial issues — only because nobody is allowed to ask them. There should not be one law for fraudsmen (alleged) and another for those who rob with the gun rather than the pen.

Whether there is any will in Whitehall to force through change remains to be seen. The treasury and home office may favour change but the lord chancellor's department, when not pandering to the preening Lord "Wolsey" Irvine's vanity, is less certain. Will one who grew so fat on legal fees cast the first stone?

The government talks the talk about cutting legal aid bills and knows that 1 percent of fraud cases gobble up 40 percent of the £1.5bn legal aid cake. But the white collar crime legal lobby is well entrenched and has a lot to lose. It will also find allies among the civil liberties lobby who see juries as inviolate even though for fraud trials the jury is never of the defendant's peers but his social, educational and professional inferiors. That's how defendants and their lawyers like it; and that's how judges allow it by excusing anyone who says they cannot afford to sit on a jury for months at a maximum £90 a day.

However, a fraud trial currently in progress demonstrates why changes must be made to save the many, not only the taxpayer but jurors, from further punishment in order to enrich the few solicitors and barristers who grow ever fatter from wallowing in this overflowing legal trough.

The trial, as they so often say, cannot be identified for legal reasons. Nor can the several defendants. However, the basic facts paint the dismal picture. The trial is now in its ninth month. It is not expected to end before April. All the defendants are on legal aid. A juror has lost his job. The trial bill is already measured in millions. The legal gravy train could run on into next year. Oh yes. And the events at the heart of the trial all happened many, many years ago.

Doubtless the defenders of the lucrative status quo will declare that all concerned are doing their best to simplify evidence and procedures and minimise the burden on jurors and taxpayers alike. But then they would, wouldn't they? Only juries and fraud trials provide this lottery-style bonanza on a regular basis. There has to be a better way.

BUT it is not only juries that pose a problem in prosecuting fraud. The Serious Farce Office also continues to do its share. Take last week's conclusion of the Norton motor cycle group trial, at which former chief executive Philippe Le Roux and company secretary/lawyer Peter Hooper were each fined a whacking £15,000 for making a misleading statement under the financial services act.

This involved fabricating a "letter of comfort' to lure investors into subscribing for a £7.5m rights issue necessary to save the company. The rights issue flopped and Norton crashed in 1991.

Initially Le Roux and Hooper also faced three more serious charges of conspiracy to defraud on which they were arrested in 1996. But these were effectively dropped in return for what looks suspiciously like a Levitt-style plea bargain on the lesser FSA charge and no jail time.

Such cosy deals are hard to justify. Especially given the cost of the police investigation and committal proceedings. Would it not have been better, quicker and cheaper to leave the Department of Timidity & Inaction to disqualify Le Roux from being a director on the basis of the damning DTI report into the Norton collapse? Why the SFO did not fancy its chances of getting a result on the major charges is depressing. The other key player, Jimmy Tildesley, is in Spain, the judge indicated he was not thinking of a prison sentence and it was all a long time ago! The SFO still gets a tick in the win column which is what clearly counts in these budget conscious days. But such outcomes are hardly likely to deter and are most certainly not cost effective.

THE new City super-watchdog, the Financial Services Authority (FSA), appears to be getting off to a distinctly rocky start. Not only is it finding top jobs hard to fill because the pay packages are unattractive to outside candidates, but many of the more experienced regulators and investigators from its constituent parts are voting with their feet.

Several senior investigative/surveillance officials from the Securities & Futures Authority (SFA), like Alan Ramsey, and the Bank of England, such as Chris Sparkes, are not moving to the FSA, preferring new less stressful pastures or early retirement.

Politics and money seem to be at the centre of a general dissatisfaction among employees of those regulatory bodies now rolled into the FSA. There are not enough senior jobs to go round, and those used to being chiefs in their own part of the regulatory jungle now find they are effectively demoted.

The FSA is also expected to be substantially less rewarding financially. SFA staff in particular are unimpressed by changes in their FSA employment contracts which will mean the loss of valuable perks such as payment for travel to and from their office. Other benefits have either gone or now need to be "bought" through a cut in the basic salary. No wonder many experienced SFA investigators are looking elsewhere than the FSA for their employment after April.

Unless the FSA solves its staff problems, especially at the operational level, it may start sliding into a regulatory black hole in which its statutory obligations are increasing, especially regarding the SFA, but its ability to carry them out is diminishing without a sizeable recruitment drive.

Hardly a good start for "new" Labour's brave new world of tough City regulation.

WHILE the Swedish prosecutor and the SFO continue to ponder what to do with Lord Moyne and Lindsay Smallbone over the plundering of the Trustor investment group, the role of their close associate Michael Wynne Parker should not be overlooked.

This is especially so as the one-time 70s faith healer and banned investment adviser was their link

"Things have gone pear-shaped on the foreign markets again, Delia – cancel my wife and family for the rest of the week!"

to the Swedes who planned the £50m fraud. It was "Reverend" Wynne Parker — formerly of the Foundation for the Wholeness of Man — who introduced Moyne, aka Jonathan Guinness, to Peter Mattsson who, with Thomas Jissander and Joachim Posener, planned the Trustor raid. Mattsson and Jisander have been charged in Sweden. Posener is on the run.

Questions have already been raised about payments said to have been made from Trustor's London bank account for Wynne Parker's benefit. These include the suggested up to £80,000 repayment of a bank loan plus fees to his PR company Introcom and the possible payment of office expenses. These payments are said to have been authorised by his pals Moyne and Smallbone, who were generous to themselves with Trustor's money.

Wynne Parker, Moyne and Smallbone have been together for some time in a series of suspect ventures including Tajik Air and Access to Justice. "Reverend" Wynne Parker gave up faith healing for finance only to be banned from giving investment advice in 1990 by regulators FIMBRA. He admitted 12 misconduct charges, including dealing in high risk investments, while running Wynne Parker Financial Management.

Perhaps not surprisingly "Reverend" Wynne Parker recently paid a voluntary visit to the SFO in order to help with their inquiries.

THESE are dark days at fund managers Johnson Fry. A big loss is expected for last year and chairman Charles Fry has departed. Like shareholders, its customers too include far from happy campers.

An *Eye* reader invested £1,000 in its French privatisation service in 1994. Managers Fry made seven purchases in the next three years. Only four produced a profit after dealing costs. The aggregate profit was just FF246 or £28.41 at the rate at which his £1,000 had been invested in 1994, but only £25 at the FF/P exchange rate last November when he lost patience and took his money out. He received back £907. Johnson Fry on the other hand had charged dealing fees totalling FF998 or just over £100.

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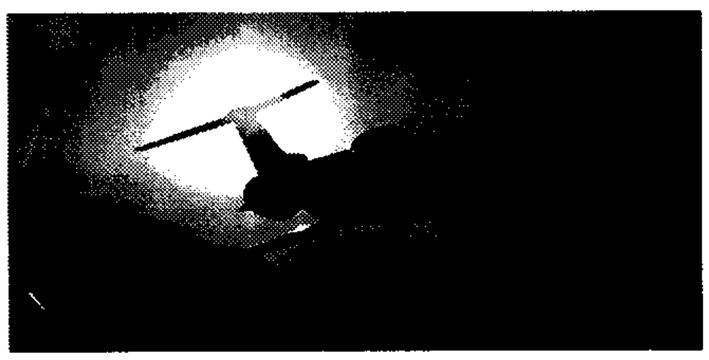

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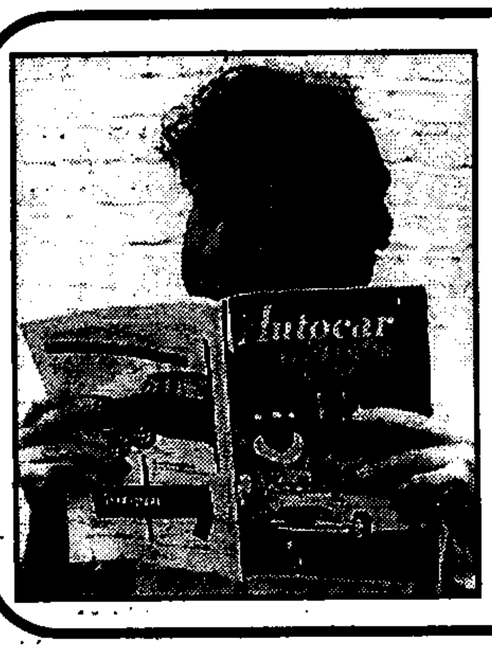

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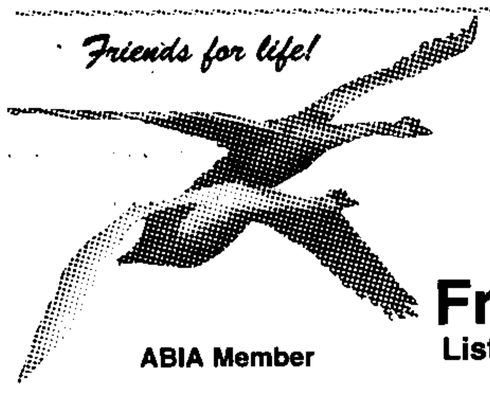

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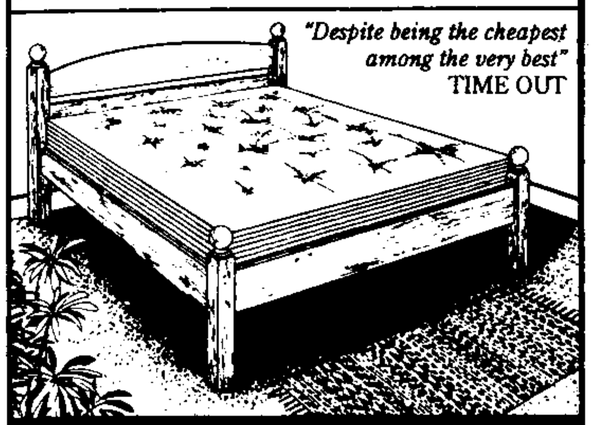

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Spectators were puzzled to notice that none of the 50 writhing souls carved on the Pillar of Shame, a memorial erected in Hong Kong to commemorate the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, are Chinese. It turned out that Danish sculptor Jens Galschiot intended The Pillar to commemorate the Oklahoma City blast victims before discovering that the US Government had already commissioned a memorial; so he gave his monument to Hong Kong.

FORTEAN TIMES

EYE SAY

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EMOUSEROUS MINE – be my late Valentine. This year's your change of name to SEARS.

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SPEECHWRITING BY MITCH MURRAY — see page 31.

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NIPPLE FANCIER (professional male, n/s, 35-60) sought by 50yr female voluptuary; educated, well-spoken, attractive, vivacious, vgsoh, sensual, sensitive, empathetic, for discreet mutual pleasure, poss occasional outings, exhibitions, music, art, opera. Absolute discretion assured and expected. Photo appreciated. Burgess Hill/London. Box 0843.

SUCCESSFUL, SINGLE, sincere, sensual professional man, 36, seeks single, non-smoking sensual woman with waist-length hair to spoil with fine wine, romantic walks, cuddles, caring and sensual massage. Long letter with interests & photo please. Reply assured. Box 0943.

REAL MAN, very successful, adventurous, protective, chivalrous, handsome, eyes that smile, 6ft, 37, between the sheets masterful and demanding. Believer in personal growth, candlelit dinners and great even risque passion. Are you happy yet deep, slim but very curvaceous with inner beauty, loyalty, kindness, under 35, seeking your soulmate? Write with photo to Box 1043. I'll call. Realise you'd never normally reply, but life is short and full of dull people and we must meet. Box 1043.

EX-PAT, LONELY, fifty, young at heart, solvent, looking for friendship, letters, etc. Will answer all letters, honest, genuine, any area. Females only, aged 45-55, looks immaterial. Box 1143.

REAL BUDDHA of Suburbia — tall, handsome Asian writer, 35, seeks intelligent woman to achieve sexual nirvana. Discretion assured. Box 1643.

TALL, ATTRACTIVE, kind, humorous man, 40, inescapably married seeks good-natured equally needy woman — safe, affectionate time-out. YORKSHIRE. Box 1743.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 46, seeks independent woman for uncomplicated relationship. Phone: 0181 202 2078 during weekdays. Box 1943.

RETIRED NICE GUY, trapped in loveless marriage wltma lady with similar problem. Discretion assured. Thames Valley. Box 2043.

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE? SWF, 40s, n/s wltm professional SWM, n/s, 35-45, London-based for dining/cinema/fun! Photo. Box 2143.

SPORTS ON A SATURDAY, antique hunting on a Sunday sound like fun? Slim attractive black lady seeking genuine gentleman for lasting relationship. Any nationality. Box 2543.

AFFECTIONATE, SUCCESSFUL, attractive professional man, 42 (attached) wltm younger married/unmarried lady with gsoh for passionate daytime encounters. Discretion assured and expected. London. Box 0341.

SPIRITED, INTELLIGENT, attractive female, 25, obsessed with literature and film, seeks love and a man not afraid of it. London. Box 1240.

TALL, DOMINANT, demanding male, 40, seeks female, any age, nationality. Phone PETER 0836 715693.

SUBMISSIVE, GENUINE, intelligent, man, 40s, good lifestyle, seeks intelligent dominant woman. London/SE. email: jslave@hotmail.com Box 1942.

32 YEAR OLD MALE occasionally misbehaves seeks strict female. Box 17362, London NW2.

SEXY, LONGHAIR BRUNETTE, 23, seeks older generous millionaire for kinky holidays and pampering. Box 2343.

STRICT, MATURE MALE seeks submissive female, age, looks immaterial. Anywhere. Box 1042.

VERY INTERESTING MAN — well-travelled, well-off, well-bred, well-read, well-hung. Handsome, tall, 45. Lives central London. Not short of friends, but loves the company of creative, attractive young females with a sense of adventure. Box 2442.

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☐ **Please send me further details about sponsoring a child, or call: 01460 61073.**

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Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____

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for information call us on
01869 324 100
Fax: 01869 324 529

or visit our website
www.dateline.uk.com

1. Personal Information

Mr ❒ Mrs ❒ Miss ❒ Ms ❒

Surname: _____

First Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

_____

Post Code _____

I am seriously interested in meeting someone through Dateline.

Marital Status: Single ❒ Divorced ❒
Widowed ❒ Separated ❒

Age: Height:

Occupation:

Religion:

Build: Slight ❒ Medium ❒ Large ❒

Attractiveness: Very attractive ❒ Attractive ❒ Average ❒

2. Education

Private / Public ❒ Grammar ❒
Comprehensive ❒ Sec. Modern ❒

O Levels / GCSE's ❒ A levels ❒
Further Education ❒
University / Professional Equivalent ❒
Technical Qualification ❒

3. Your Personality

(tick which traits closely describe you)

❒ Affectionate ❒ Fashionable
❒ Serious ❒ Practical
❒ Considerate ❒ Conventional
❒ Shy ❒ Reliable
❒ Romantic ❒ Adventurous

4. Your Attitudes

(tick for yes, cross for no or leave blank)

❒ Do you involve yourself with community activities?
❒ Are you looking for one special relationship?
❒ Does your work make it difficult to meet new people?
❒ Do you want to extend your social life as well as finding a special relationship?
❒ Do you devote a lot of time to your social life?

5. Your interests

(sections 5. and 6. Please tick for a like, cross for dislike or leave blank for no preference.)

❒ Wining/Dining ❒ Jazz/Folk music
❒ Pubs ❒ Classical music
❒ Sports/Keep fit ❒ Theatre/Arts
❒ Politics/History ❒ Watching TV
❒ Reading ❒ Smoking
❒ Travelling ❒ Astrology
❒ Science/Tech ❒ Children
❒ Cinema ❒ Homemaking
❒ Pets/Animals ❒ Gardening
❒ Pop music ❒ Countryside

6. Details of your ideal partner

Minimum age: Maximum age:

Height: min. max. Don't mind ❒

Marital status:

Single ❒ Divorced ❒
Widowed ❒ Separated ❒
Don't mind ❒

Build: Slight ❒ Medium ❒ Large ❒

Attractiveness: Very attractive ❒ Attractive ❒ Average ❒

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Dateline

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